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Friday
10 March '95

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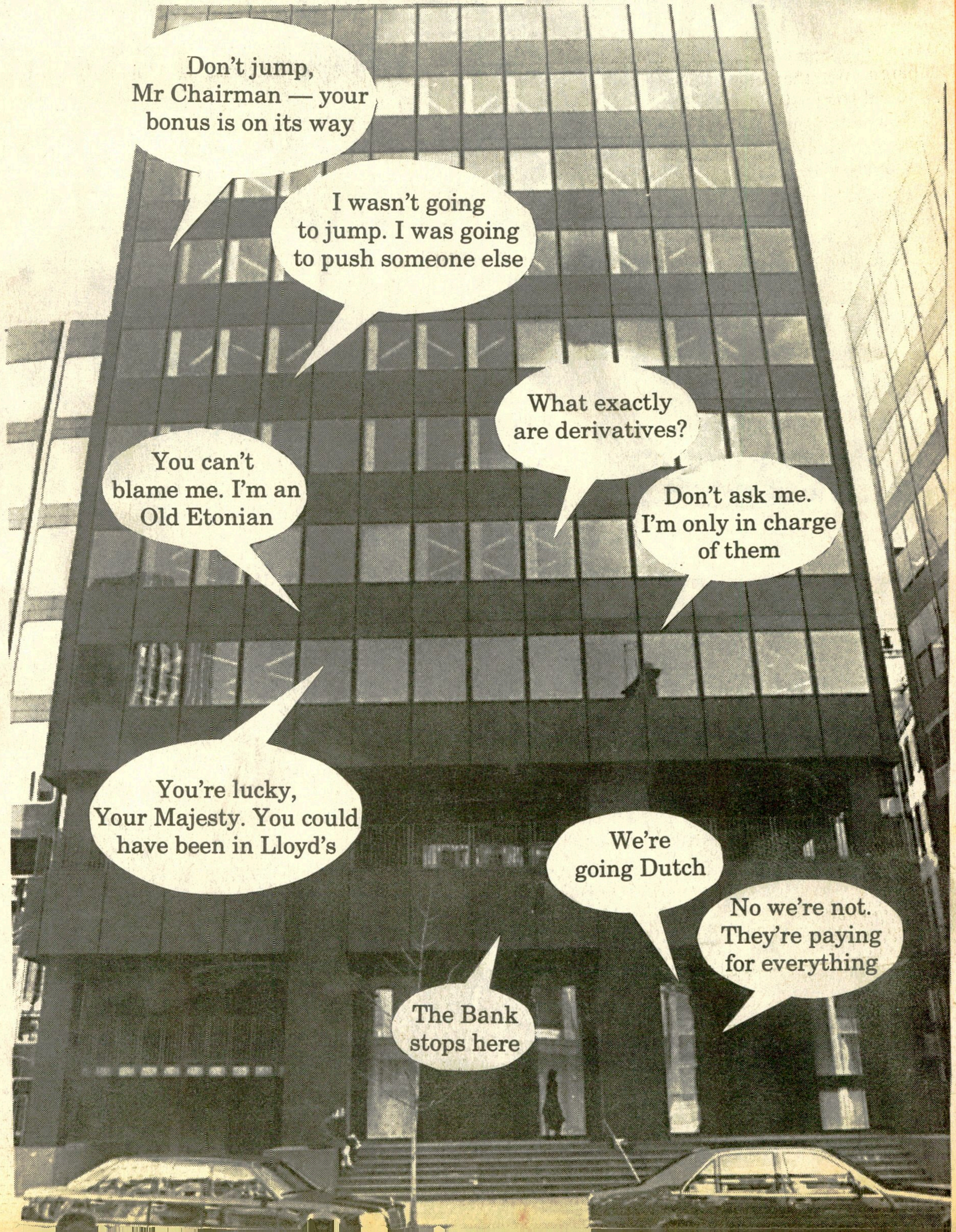
Don't jump, Mr Chairman — your bonus is on its way
I wasn't going to jump. I was going to push someone else
What exactly are derivatives?
Don't ask me. I'm only in charge of them
You can't blame me. I'm an Old Etonian
You're lucky, Your Majesty. You could have been in Lloyd's
We're going Dutch
No we're not. They're paying for everything
The Bank stops here

THE PRIVATE EYE

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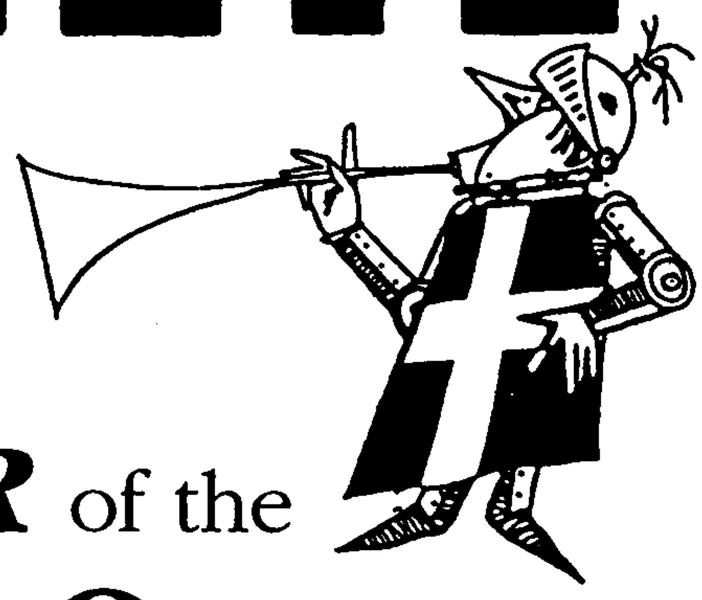

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Address *(please print)* .....

..... *postcode* .....

Gnome

THE DECISION by the Home Office to refuse me a British passport despite some 30 years' residence here is a matter of shame for what was once the greatest nation in the world.

When I think of what I have contributed to this country, e.g. the preservation of the shoe collection in Paris of the late Duchess of Windsor and... er... *[Strobes: fill in my other achievements]* it is little short of disgraceful that I should be deemed persona non grata in my beloved country.

However, I do not intend to descend to the petty and peevish level of Mr John Major and his government, who have attempted to smear me as a "blackmailer".

Nothing could be further from the truth, and, were this charge to be repeated, I would be forced to reveal a series of photographs I have in my possession taken at the Gnome Hilton and featuring no less than six members of the Cabinet.

You have been warned *(shurely 'Yours sincerely'?)*

Mohamed Al- Gnome.
c/o Horrids
Knightbridge
London
(Written in his presence by Michael Strobes and signed with his mark.)

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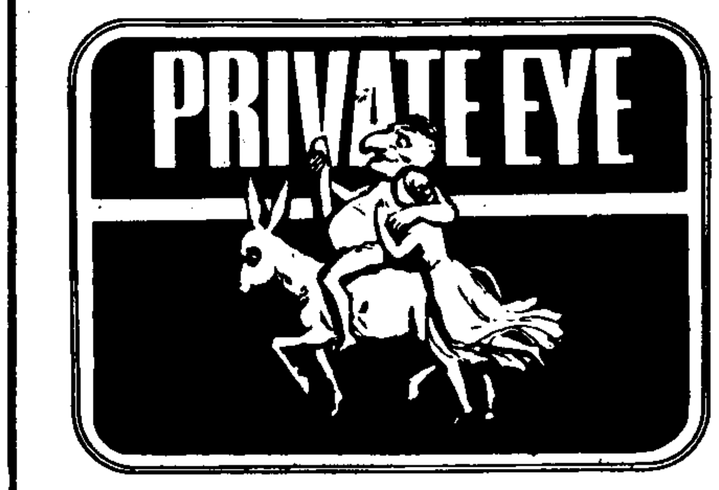
Question: What publication, just awarded the GEORGE ORWELL PRIZE FOR JOURNALISM, was banned by the distributor John Menzies?

Answer: See opposite page.



COLOUR SECTION

THE Bank of England, which has set up an "entirely independent" inquiry into the collapse of Barings, was itself, it emerges, a client of the collapsed merchant bank.

This rather embarrassing fact was admitted to the *Eye* by a Bank of England spokesman, who made two points:

"One is that we're an investment management client of Barings through the pension fund; the other is that from time to time we have had corporate financial advice from them. They acted for us in the flotation of 3i, where we were a shareholder. They may also have provided advice for us when we sold our shareholding in Portals a few years ago."

The extent of the fees paid by the Bank of England to Barings might, or might not, be an urgent matter for investigation by the new "independent inquiry". But how "independent" is the inquiry?

The Bank of England is keen to reassure sceptics that its inquiry is not another case of an investigation by the chief suspects. There are, it insists, no practising bankers on the board of banking supervision which is carrying out the (secret) inquiry — just accountants, lawyers and retired bankers.

There is one small hitch in this argument. The chairman of the board of banking supervision is the great rogue regulator himself: Eddie George, governor of the, er, Bank of England.

THE brochures selling the remaining government shares in National Power and PowerGen sport coloured photographs front and back showing sea waves breaking. How *nice*, the innocent investor is encouraged to think, to spend money on clean electricity from the power of the waves...

If only it were true. The two generating giants slashed spending on such "greenery" after they were privatised. The Central Electricity Generating Board which spawned them spent £50 million in its last year (1989) on non-nuclear research. In today's money that is £65 million; how much are its successors spending? National Power spent £26 million on research projects last year and PowerGen £9 million, making a total of £35 million. Where did the other £30 million go? On pay rises, bonuses and share options for executives and directors.

While John Major hints that he might, perhaps, possibly, maybe do something about the new post-privatisation utility millionaires, Lord Tebbit (of British Telecom) has been going on the radio to explain that no one need worry because the money comes out of shareholders' dividends. Poppycock. It comes out of such "economies" as the decision by the two electricity generating companies to cut research and development. Instead they burn gas, oil, coal and orimulsion and pump out smoke into the atmosphere.

Meanwhile the soon to be floated National Grid and its soon to be double millionaire chairman David Jefferies (£2 million share options) are too mean to spend on removing giant pylons and burying power lines. The grid has 7,000 kilometres of overhead cable and only 600 underground and has just received permission to build a new 90 kilometres line — nearly all overhead across the most beautiful part of North Yorkshire.

IN OUR last issue we reported that the former KGB Colonel Victor Kubeykin was none too pleased with the *Sunday Times*, which claimed that he had "confirmed" Oleg Gordievsky's absurd story about Michael Foot.

Kubeykin insisted he had done nothing of the sort. He had in fact complained to *ST* Moscow correspondent Carey Scott that she and her oafish colleague David Leppard had misrepresented him.

We have now received a letter from the *Sunday Times*, "dictated by Carey Scott and signed in her absence by Sian Roberts, foreign manager".

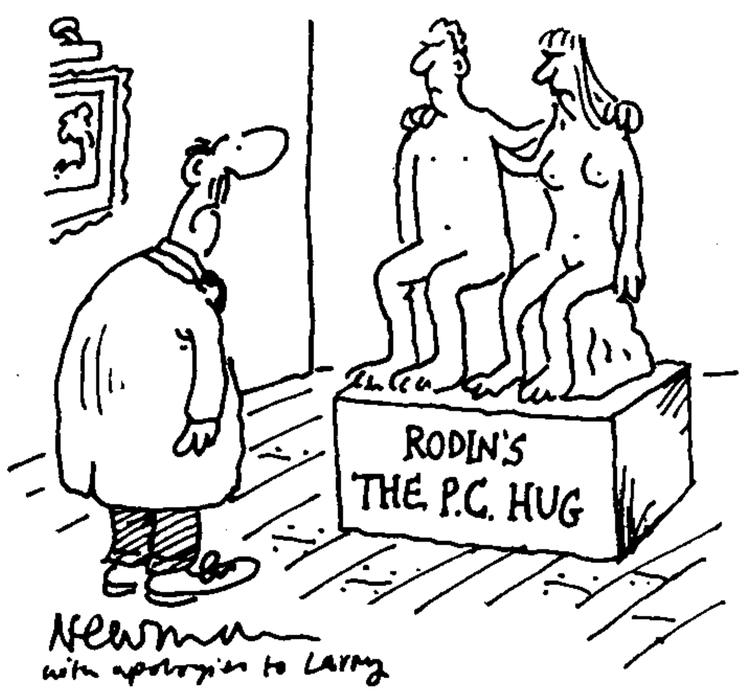
"For the record, contrary to your report in *Private Eye* on 24 February, I would like to state that Colonel Kubeykin was not misquoted in the *Sunday Times* article," Scott writes. What happened, she says, is that an ITN correspondent in Moscow "misinformed Colonel Kubeykin about the precise words attributed to him in my newspaper's article. Kubeykin rang me, alarmed, to check about one particular phrase which I agreed he had not said in the interview. I rang London and confirmed that the phrase about which Colonel Kubeykin was concerned did not appear anywhere in the article and he was completely reassured that his interview had been faithfully reported in Leppard's article."

The only slight problem with Carey Scott's letter is that it is untrue. By the time Kubeykin had filmed his interview with ITN, denouncing Leppard and Scott for misquoting him, he had read the *Sunday Times* article and therefore knew perfectly well what was in it. "When I saw what was written in the *Sunday Times* I became furious," he told the *Eye* from Moscow last week. "I said I never knew Foot was an agent, and I did not suppose that he was among those who interested us at that time as a potential subject... They misrepresented what I said."

Afterwards, according to Kubeykin, Scott rang him and "said she was sorry". He told her "that I would never speak to that Leppard man in my life even if he apologised... Leppard had put words into my mouth."

Does Carey Scott really believe that Kubeykin was "completely reassured that his interview had been faithfully reported in Leppard's article"? If so, she is even stupider than we thought. If not, she is a liar. Either way, she is obviously well qualified for a job on the *Sunset Times*.

- ***Slicker on Barings*** 28
- ***Frywatch*** 9
- ***UN Special*** 12
- ***Child Abuse*** 12
- ***Hallo Di, Archer, Mellor et al*** . . . 5



Street of Shame

ALL the tabloids were desperate to sign up Lisa Leeson, wife of the banker who lost his Barings. But the *Daily Express* believed it was in pole position when it discovered that her father, Alec Sims, was a retired printer who used to work for the *Express*. Surely loyalty to his old employer would count for something?

Apparently not. Sims told the *Express* he wouldn't do a deal with it unless he was sure it wasn't going to say beastly things about the lovely Lisa. So, last Wednesday, the ever-obliging Sir Nick Lloyd published a hagiographical article about the "attractive blonde": she had been a "model pupil" at school, she was "bright and bubbly", she had "plenty of friends" and she was "totally honest, trustworthy and reliable".

All to no avail. The following morning Nick and Lisa arrived in Frankfurt — where she was whisked away by representatives of the *Daily Mirror*.

YET another expensive mistake by Eamonn McCabe, picture editor of the *Guardian*: two weeks ago he illustrated a report of the rape case involving comedy actor Craig Charles with a photo which, according to the *Grauniad*'s caption, showed one of Charles's co-defendants, John Peploe.

Alas! The man in the picture was in fact Charles's younger brother Emile, and the paper was obliged to print a grovelling apology the next day.

Still, never mind: Eamonn believes these things soon blow over and are forgotten so long as no one draws attention to them. Hence his chagrin at the recent story in the *Eye* revealing how the *Grauniad* had taken a photograph of a young picture researcher and then pretended she was a "girl gangster".

On the day our article appeared, McCabe strode round the office demanding to know who the whistleblower was. For McCabe's sake, we can only hope that his disloyal colleagues will desist from sending us any more examples of his lapses of judgement.

THE *Daily Star* went to town recently with its front-page splash "Sea of Blacks Race Fury — TV Judge rapped over Enoch-style speech".

The rag, not noted for its liberalism on race, reported remarks made by the self-publicist and former judge James Pickles at a literary lunch in Leeds. The old buffer apparently said black and Asian people were "spreading like cancer" in our cities.

Surprisingly the *Star* did not record the fact that the organiser of the lunch which invited the judge to air his repugnant views was the *Yorkshire Post* — stablemate of the *Star* in Lord Stevens' United Newspapers empire. The *Post*'s own bland report made no mention of Pickles' racist outburst, but gave a copious plug to his pisspoor novel instead.

FLEET STREET is in a state of gob-smacked amazement at the news that *Mail on Sunday* editor Jonathan Holborow has paid £300,000 for the serial rights to a new book about Mark Thatcher by Mark Hollingsworth and former *Eye* hack Paul Halloran. No one can work out why Holborow felt it necessary to spend so much — especially as the rival bidder, the *Sunset Times*, dropped out of the race at £200,000.

More amazingly still, Holborow bought the book without even having seen the manuscript. So how can he be sure he is getting his money's worth? He explains that Halloran is an old friend who has never yet let him down.

This may come as a surprise to some of Halloran's other friends — not least David Mellor, whom Halloran first introduced to Antonia de Sancha, with disastrous consequences.

HACKS at the *Financial Times* have received a stern memo from editor Richard "Safe Hands" Lambert, instructing them to be extremely careful when doing any share dealing.

"Even where the law does not prohibit it, journalists should not use for their own profit financial information they receive in advance of its general publication, nor should they pass such information to others," he warns. "Anyone who, prior to publication, uses information gained as a result of their position on the *FT* staff... will be regarded as guilty of misconduct and liable to summary dismissal."

One wonders if this applies to Julia Cuthbertson, the paper's news editor, who recently sent a series of faxes to a "chum" concerning rumours of a takeover bid for Costain.

"My source said he'd bet his reputation on Bovis," her first message read. (The source in question was *FT* hack Andy Taylor, who was covering the Costain story.) The next day she sent more detailed advice, revealing that the possible buyers included not only Bovis but also the German company Hochtief. "Analysts say unlikely anybody would pay above 25p a share, which would either leave you with a huge profit or loss — I know not which. Anyway, timing is everything, as with most other things in life, so I hope you make the right move at the right moment. If the shares go any higher, our correspondent will be writing that the price is ludicrous. Shouldn't be any competition for it, just a construction contractor with no assets... price of £130 million would be 25p a share, which reasonable... I expect dinner somewhere terribly flash from the millions you make. Will keep steely eye on it."

A day later, Cuthbertson sent her "chum" an update. A bid by P&O was said to be in the offing "but at a discount to current market price. Lord S thought likely to offer 20p a share when you were up to 22½p yesterday. Anyway, sit tight. Hanson may come aboard though claims of interest described as rubbish. It would be nice to be extremely rich but this may not be the golden key. Will keep you posted..."

The *Eye* asked Julia Cuthbertson how her private share-tipping service tallied with the guidelines laid down by Lambert. "Oh God," she replied. "I was just having a joke with a friend of mine. It's all completely innocent. I don't have any shares of any kind." She added: "I don't even know anything about shares" — a rather surprising admission from the news editor of the *Financial Times*.

THOSE SUNDAY TIMES SCOOPS IN FULL

JOHN WITHEROW of the *Sunday Times* was understandably proud that his paper won the "Scoop of the Year" prize at the *What The Papers Say* awards last month. And, to prove it wasn't a fluke, two days after the ceremony he produced an issue positively bulging with further scoops.

On page 5 the paper disclosed that the Conservative party's director of communications was "marooned in office when he has another job to go to", because the Tories were unable to find a replacement. Exactly the same story had already appeared in the *Independent* two days earlier.

On page 7 *ST* hack Andrew Alderson "revealed" details of a new book in which diplomats, general and bishops talk about their homosexual experiences at public school. Strangely, this article was almost identical to one published in the *Daily Telegraph* more than two months earlier, on 8 December.

On page 11 the paper's brilliant gossip-columnist Taki exposed the lavish new allowances for Euro-MPs, which allow them to claim £71,000 a year for secretarial expenses. Perhaps the Greek hedonist had been enjoying the fine white powder on the slopes of Gstaad on 1 January: for that was when the *Observer* published the same story.

Page 14 carried yet another bombshell: Carmen Callil had resigned as chairman of Virago after 22 years. Or, as the *Daily Telegraph* had reported three days earlier: "Carmen Callil is giving up the chairmanship of Virago, which she founded in 1973."

And so to the foreign pages. Tony Allen-Mills, the *ST*'s award-winning Paris correspondent, revealed that Jacques Delors' daughter, Martine Aubry, "is positioning herself to become France's first woman President". This was almost as interesting as the report in the *Daily Telegraph* on 12 December last year, which noted that Aubry "is tipped as France's first woman president". The *ST* also disclosed that the state of Mississippi had voted to allow judges to order criminals to be birched — a piece of news that had appeared in the *Guardian* more than two weeks earlier.

Finally the paper's up-to-the-minute diary column, Quidnunc, broke the news that boxer Terry Marsh was taking legal action against Basildon Labour party. One wonders if this item could by any chance be related to the London *Evening Standard*'s headline on 31 January: "Boxer Marsh tries KO on Labour Party".

So was there *anything* in John Witherow's super soaraway paper that could accurately be described as a scoop. Ah yes: pages 1, 2 and 3 were filled with an "exclusive" about Michael Foot and the KGB. Alas, within hours of the paper hitting the streets, Witherow had already confessed that the story might well be "complete rubbish".

TO CELEBRATE Scotland Yard's announcement that Lord Lucan is still alive, Christopher Wilson of *Today* wrote a spoof article two weeks ago headed "Lucan: The Wildebeest Years", in which he imagined the peer sitting in some fly-blown hideaway in Africa nursing a large whisky.

The joke did not go down too well with some executives at *Toady*. For, unbeknown to Wilson, they had just despatched reporter Bob Graham to Africa for three weeks, at vast expense, to follow up a tip that Lucan was indeed hiding in the dark continent. He returned empty-handed.

The REV DIGGER
IT WASN'T TRUE! BUT IT WAS A GREAT HEADLINE!
SO IS THIS ONE!
THE SUNDAY TIMES
KGB: Foot was our agent
Murdoch seeks new editor for S/Times

JUST FANCY THAT

MANCHESTER United were shattered last night by the FA's own "Kung Fu" attack on Eric Cantona...

— Daily Mirror, *25 February 1995, page 35.*

FOOTBALL's rulers joined Eric Cantona in the gutter last night by handing him an eight-month holiday with pay...

— Daily Mirror, *25 February 1995, page 36.*

HALLO!

THE HEARTWARMING COLUMN

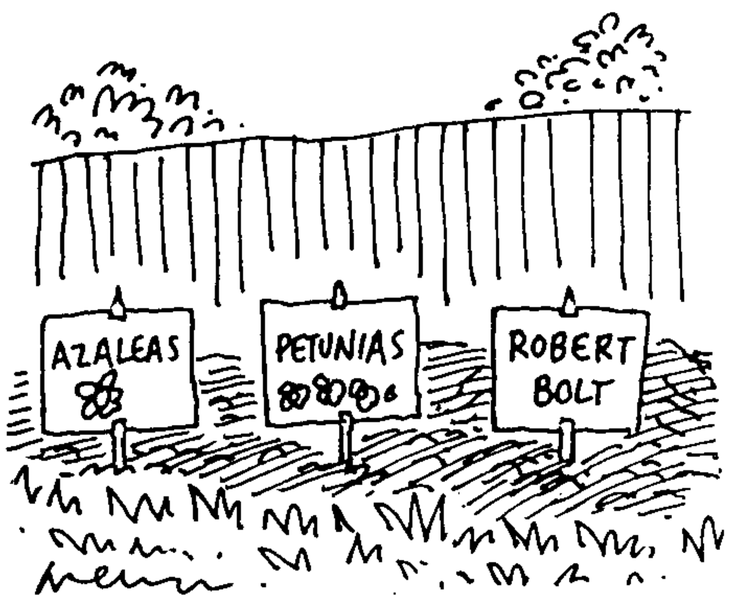
HALLO! BARINGS, the Marquesa's bankers, were recently asked by the publishers of *Independent Financial Advice* to contribute a 1,000 word article under the heading: "Successful investment in emerging markets is notoriously difficult. What are the pitfalls and how can a UK investment house overcome these?"

IFA diplomatically asked if there were a better way to phrase the question. The Barings executive to whom the query was directed was a Mr Dick Turpin.

HALLO! HOPING to escape the tittle-tattle over her liaison with art dealer Oliver Hoare, Diana took off to the remote but terribly gay Caribbean resort of St Barthelemy, where a sandwich costs $50.

She was the guest of millionaire French photographer Patrick Demarchelier, so did not have to dip into her own pocket. But who was the naked man who walked past the princess and her chum Catherine Soames, former wife of Tory minister Nicholas "Fatty" Soames, on the beach? By extraordinary coincidence it was the Marquesa's old friend Marc Morelli, the man who processed those infamous snaps of Fergie having her toes sucked by a financial adviser.

Hopefully there will be no such indignity for poor Diana.



HALLO! *POOR Lord Archer is under intolerable strain. At the Berkeley Hotel, during a fundraising dinner where he is the guest speaker, the great novelist suddenly goes white and shouts at the waiters.*

He orders them, most unpleasantly, to leave the room or he will not make his speech. How odd! After all, Jeffrey claims to have once worked as a menial himself at the nearby Dorchester Hotel. Curiously, the Dorchester has no record of this. An admin error, no doubt.

HALLO! TO THE Chinese embassy to celebrate Chinese new year. And there, once again, is Lady Thatcher's old adviser Sir Charles Powell. The Chinese have great fun trying to pronounce his name ("Pole", as Sir Charles insists).

But what is the old snob up to? He has visited the Chinese embassy at least half a dozen times over the past year. Surely as a director of merchant bankers Matheson, part of the Hong Kong-based Jardine group, he wouldn't be sucking up to the Communist dictatorship?

Sir Charles merely smiles and observes, enigmatically: "It is the year of the pig, y'know."

HALLO! *TO THE Barbican to hear Sir Michael Tippett's* Visions of Paradise.

It is a lively evening, not least when a loud shout of "Visions of Hell" rings out across the auditorium from an ungrateful heckler.

The ungrateful yob is not alone, however, and Sir Michael's work attracts so much booing that five protesters are frogmarched outside by the security guards.

Imagine the Marquesa's relief when listening to a recording of the concert on Radio 3 she hears that all this unpleasantness has been edited out.

HALLO! TO a glamorous literary party in Soho, attended by the craggily handsome right-wing historian and drinker, Norman Stone. Meeting Wendy Thomas, blonde director of Population Concern, Norman rants on about political correctness.

Amusingly, he recounts the time when the Oxford university examining board was searching for original questions to tax the minds of students of modern history. "We should have a question related to wimmin's issues," Norman suggested to his startled colleagues. "What about this? If wimmin had not got the vote, Hitler would have never come to power. Discuss."

What a mind!

HALLO! PRINCESS Michael of Kent, known for some reason as Princess Pushy, is frightfully busy nowadays. At this very minute she is on a lecture tour of America, giving talks based on her historical "work", *Crowned in a Far Country*.

How much is she paid for this arduous task? A measly £20,000 a lecture! No wonder she can't give any of it to the people who actually wrote her book, and whose efforts she "borrowed".

Private I-I-I!

THIS ISSUE'S rundown of the nation's most self-obsessed columnists, based on the number of incidences of the word "I" per column-inch.

		Ego Rating
1	Michael Winner (Sunday Times 5/3)	2.76
2	Mandy Smith (Sunday Times 25/1)	2.71
3	Justine Picardie (IoS 26/2)	2.44
4	Zoe Heller (Sunday Times 5/3)	2.28
5	Miles Kington (Independent 28/2)	1.78
6	Leslie Thomas (Mail 28/2)	1.71
7	Mike Ward (Toady 4/3)	1.70
8	Michael Winner (Sunday Times 26/2)	1.61
9	Oscar Moore (Guardian 4/3)	1.54
10	Quentin Crisp (Guardian 24/2)	1.53

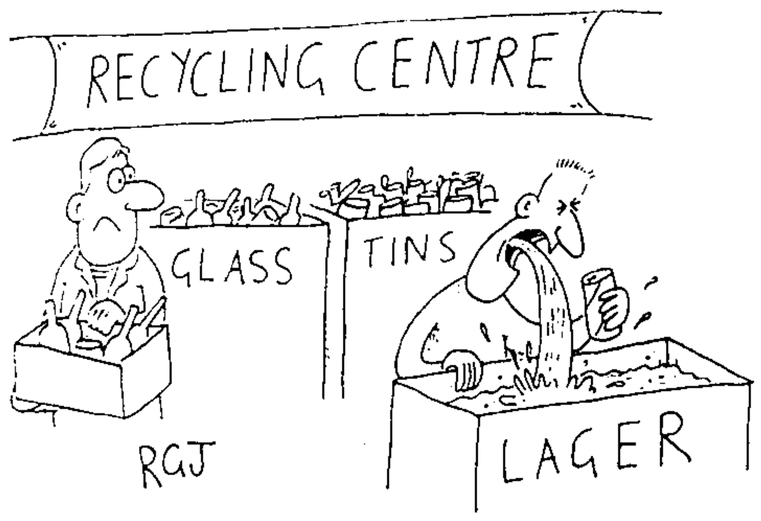
Special mention: Justine Picardie for five 'I's in one line (IoS 26/2). Bubblin' under: Harry Enfield, Matthew Parris, Jonathan Woss, Laura Thompson.

SPY-I-I

THIS issue's winner: Oleg Gordievsky (Sunday Times 26/2).

References to self: 231

References to sinister cabal of KGB agents of influence: 0



HALLO! TO NUMBER 10 Downing Street for a glamorous "showbiz" do with John and Norma. The Marquesa rubs shoulders with Dames Judi Dench and Diana Rigg, and celebrates the "renaissance" in British arts engineered by the Tories and their highbrow "lottery".

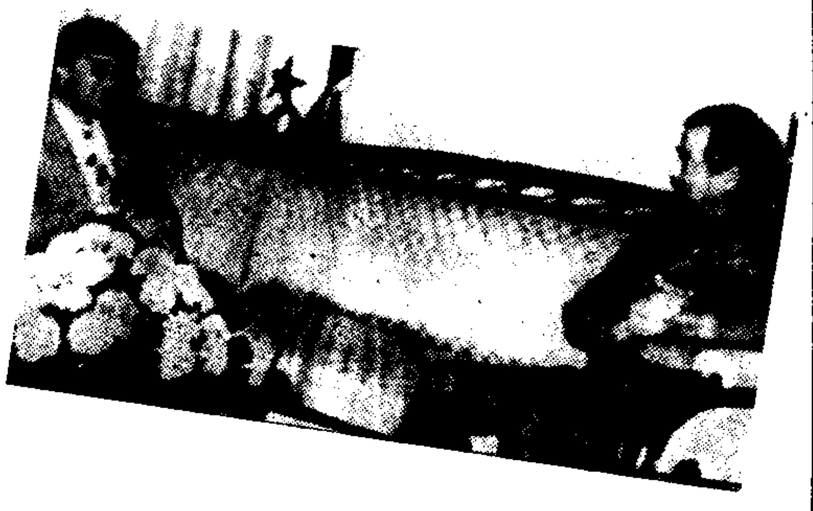
I am bemused afterwards, however, when UPI sends me a photograph of the event, captioned: "Major in conversation with Joan Collins, watched by unidentified man."

The unidentified gentleman in question looks like a rented Italian waiter. In fact the interloper to this fascinating *tete-a-tete* between Norma and Joan is Mr Eve Bollard, aka Sir Nicholas Lloyd, editor of the glittering *Daily Express*.

The Marquesa

HALLO! *MY heartwarming snap from Bahrain* (left) *shows the fun-loving former minister David Mellor once again accepting Arab largesse. With his beautiful mistress, Penny, Viscountess Cobham, David was discussing "bi-lateral relations" last month with the emir, Shaikh Isa bin Sulman Al Khalifa.*

My other charming portrait (right) *shows David in February 1989, when as junior foreign office minister he jetted over to Baghdad in order to offer £330 million worth of trade credits to the engaging Mr Saddam Hussein!*



IN THE TEAROOM

WHAT can explain Norman Lamont's decision to vote with Labour on Europe?

Does he really still want to punish John Major for sacking him? Is he even prepared to position himself as a possible stalking-horse for November's leadership challenge? Or was it simply that he gave in to the temptation to crack a second magnum over lunch with the *Mail on Sunday*'s political correspondent on the afternoon of the debate?

No, Lamont's real reason for joining the opposition in the lobby was pique at the foreign secretary's patronising behaviour in the chamber. Lamont asked what he thought was a serious and sensible question about the political consequences of joining a single-currency, only to find himself contemptuously dismissed by Flogger Hurd in his most priggish, Eton-prefect manner.

The ex-chancellor has good reason to dislike Hurd even more than he does Major. Though Lamont had to take the blame for the collapse of managed exchange rates, he had never been that keen on them. The ERM's chief apologist in cabinet was always Douglas Hurd.

'Urquhart'

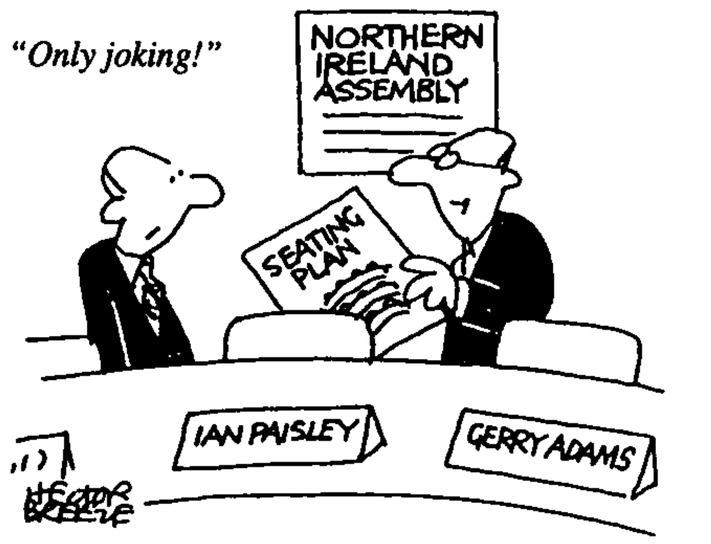
LADY Olga Maitland, Tory MP for Sutton and Cheam, promised her local Conservative association that she would find a home in the constituency.

(However, as observers of last year's famous disabled debate in the Commons will recall, she can be economical with the truth. That debate was filibustered with the help of the MP and a little white lie.)

When the *Eye* reported last year that Lady Olga had still not fulfilled her vow to find a house in her constituency, she was said to be happily house-hunting. Meanwhile she remained firmly ensconced in her lovely Islington home. Indeed, she recently gave an interview to her local paper — not the *Sutton Bugle* but the *Islington Gazette*, in which she continues to sing the praises of her adopted home. As the article says: "She is absolutely certain that she never wants to leave Islington."

MODEST Barry Legg, Tory MP for Milton Keynes South West, is not at all disconcerted about disclosures of his role as Lady Porter's chief henchman in the Westminster council corruption scandal — nor, it seems, about the possibility that he may be surcharged out of sight.

He spoke up boldly in the debate on the budget on 17 January, reminding the House of the mismanagement of the economy under the last Labour government. Interrupted by a Labour backbencher about his own "record in presiding over financial matters", Mr Legg replied: "My financial record is outstanding. My contributions in national and local government to saving money and efficiency are outstanding."



IT WAS with remarkable foresight that health minister John "roly-poly" Bowis reassured party loyalists that the district auditor would not be accusing the London borough of Wandsworth, in which Bowis has his Battersea constituency, of gerrymandering.

While the auditor reported last week that the flagship borough *had* sold homes unlawfully, Bowis's prediction on vote-rigging turned out to be 100 percent correct.

At a reception days before the report was published, the member whose majority in Battersea miraculously rose at the last general election, was overheard to insist: "Don't worry. No one will ever accuse us of gerrymandering marginal wards in Wandsworth because we did it across the whole borough!"

IS the House of Lords as clean as it has been pretending recently?

When there was a delay in building the Newbury bypass, the Earl of Carnarvon told the Lords that the causes for the delay were innocuous, and he cited the many benefits the road would bring.

What the eminent earl failed to mention was that he was also a local landowner whose land would run adjacent to the proposed new road.

Land next to a busy bypass can of course reap big financial rewards for its owners. Blue Boar Properties recently paid more than £1 million to Lord Porchester for five acres of land next to the bypass. Now the bypass is delayed, the land earmarked for a service station is worth a paltry £5,000. Lord Porchester is still smiling though and has no doubt earned hearty congrats from his dad — the Earl of Carnarvon!

THE bizarre resignation of Charles Wardle, the junior trade minister, has not been universally mourned at the home office, where he served as junior minister in charge of immigration from 1992 to 1994.

More than one civil servant there who had to deal with Wardle became upset by the minister's habit of shouting at his inferiors and his constant reference to a six-letter word beginning with "w" (not Wardle).

Complaints never got further than the civil service unions, but they are believed to be not entirely unconnected with Wardle's shift to the department of trade. When the *Independent on Sunday* (wrongly) alleged that the complaints had been sent formally to the home secretary, Wardle angrily threatened writs, which have not yet materialised.

TORY Euro-fanatic Hugh Dykes, MP for Harrow East, did his bit for European integration at a recent reception in Paris for delegates from the European Union's national parliaments.

A member of the Commons EEC (*What that? Ed.*) select committee, Dykes was invited to the French senate meeting aimed at improving relations between national parliaments and the EU. But Monsieur Dykes became furious when he spotted a British journalist sitting across the dinner table.

The woman, a long-standing Paris correspondent, had never met Dykes before and was astonished to be the subject of his ire. He shouted at the French waiters and security to remove her, and repeatedly shrieked: "I know what you are!" at the flabbergasted reporter.

Sadly security did not come to Dykes's aid. Indeed, no one could understand a word the resolute federalist was saying as he was yelling in English.

'Backbiter'

HOW PARLIAMENT WORKS Pt 94: THE OLYMPIC SYMBOL

THERE was no objection from any part of the House when Nicholas Winterton, Tory MP for Macclesfield, introduced the Olympic symbol (protection) bill on 3 February.

Winterton is such a notorious windbag no one was too surprised when he bored on for 20 minutes about how his bill would protect the symbol from "unauthorised commercial exploitation". Barbara Roche from the Labour benches spoke for five minutes, emphasising Labour's support, and that should have been that. Instead the debate went on for two more ridiculous hours, leaving no time for discussion of another private bill, introduced by Eric Martlew (Labour, Carlisle) on the protection of calves — a matter of deep and wide public interest.

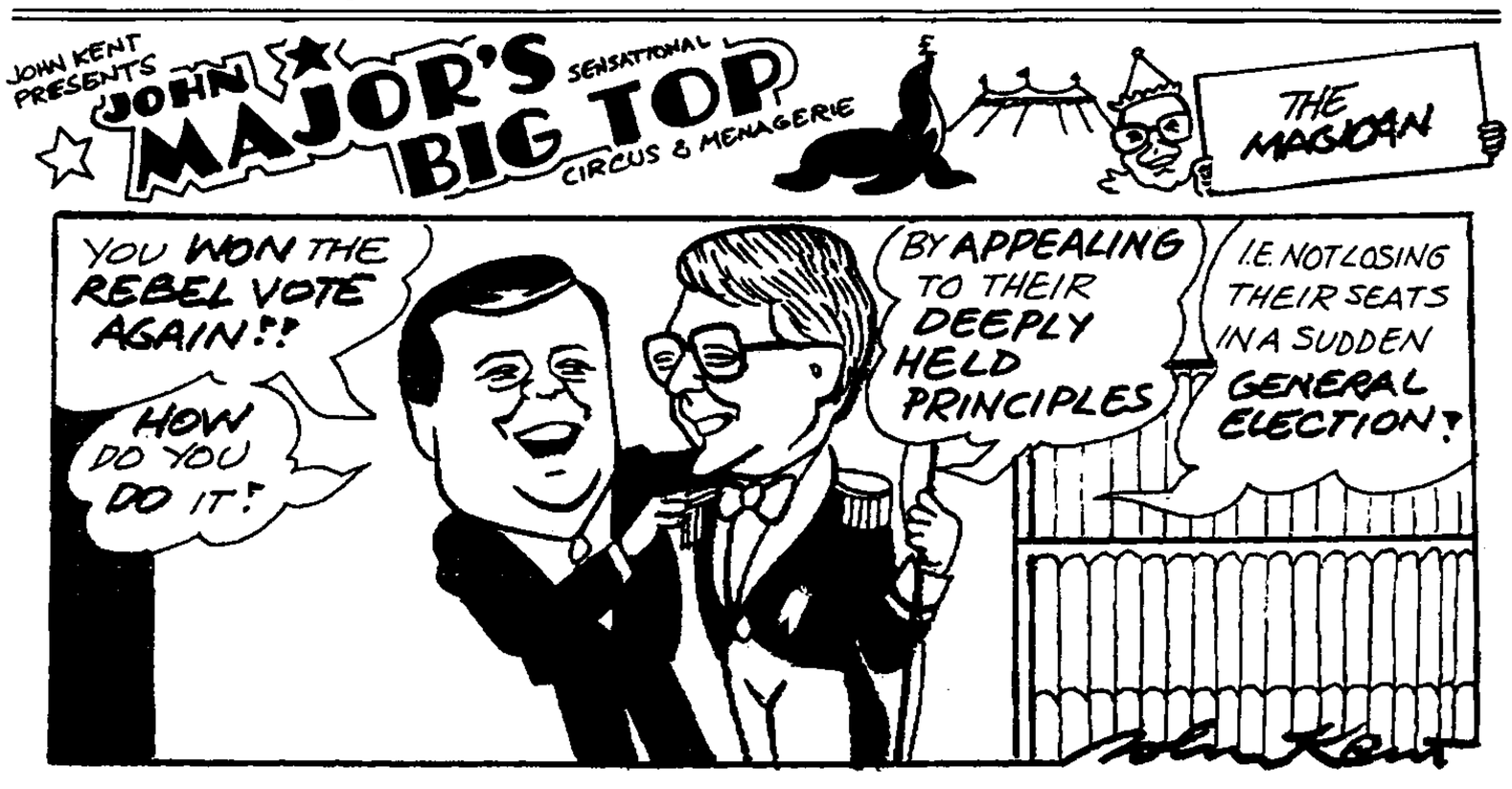
The following Tory MPs spoke on the Olympic symbol bill (note how many come from farming constituencies and have protested about the demonstrations against the export of calves): Oliver Heald (Herts North), who is parliamentary private secretary to the agriculture secretary, William Waldegrave; Peter Atkinson (Hexham); Jacques Arnold (Gravesham); Piers Merchant (Beckenham); Michael Stephen (Shoreham); Michael Stern (Bristol North-West); Edward Garnier (Harborough); Michael Fabricant (Mid-Staffordshire); and the junior heritage minister Ian Sproat. It is hard to choose from such a list of bores and buffoons, but a taste of the quality of debate can be gleaned from the opening remarks of the most boring buffoon of them all, Jacques Arnold:

"The House will be familiar with the magnificent equestrian figure of my Hon Friend (Mr Winterton), who tried to tempt me into the sporting field on a visit to the west Falklands some years ago, where we set out one morning to try to improve our equestrian skills — he sitting magnificently on a horse and me clinging to it in a way I had never done for a quarter of a century previously.

Mr Fabricant: The same horse?

Mr Arnold: I assure my hon friend that it was a different horse. Perhaps if it had been the same horse I would not have suffered the fall that I did...

On and on this went until Mr Martlew's bill was blocked. When he complained about the blatant filibuster, he was told it was all "quite in order".


JOHN KENT PRESENTS
JOHN MAJOR'S SENSATIONAL BIG TOP CIRCUS & MENAGERIE
THE MAGICIAN
YOU WON THE REBEL VOTE AGAIN!!
HOW DO YOU DO IT!
BY APPEALING TO THEIR DEEPLY HELD PRINCIPLES
I.E. NOT LOSING THEIR SEATS IN A SUDDEN GENERAL ELECTION!
John Kent

LET'S PARLER PRESCOTT

"THE TORIES have done many things much damage to here in London, a proud once great city. London beat the racists in Tower Hamlets and the rest of the party proud of you doing it were and we much talk about outside the rest of London.

"Let me leave you with one thought in view of the time which is important to put over a good idea. Why not employ more teachers in social productivity to challenge the economic productivity only so we shall show to the Tories where they are. Let us say something to the unemployed, yes you are after full employment years and we **can** go back forward now back to full employment."

— 26 February 1995, London Labour party conference, University of London, Malet Street. Deputy leader's address.

NOOKS and CORNERS

CERTAIN groups of people, like endangered species, are to be found together in particular places. If you need to interview a Cockney gangster, the place to look is the Costa del Sol. If you are after old Nazis, you go to South America. And if you are wanting a good old-fashioned road engineer who still believes that motorway-building is the answer to all human problems, you will find a remarkable concentration of them in the roads department of Strathclyde regional council.

Note the name of the department: not "transport" but "roads". Road engineers run the council and, in effect, Glasgow. They still believe in that vision of endless freeways which they saw in Detroit and Los Angeles back in the heady 60s, despite the fact that Glasgow still has one of the lowest car-owning populations in Britain; despite the fact that the idea that road-building generates economic growth is discredited and that all civilised European countries are trying to discourage the motor car and promote better public transport.

Strathclyde regional council will not be with us much longer, of course. But in its last days it is doing its best to push ahead with new motorways of which it has been dreaming for years — like a dinosaur in its death throes, tail flailing to smash up more of the fabric of the city.

First came the M77 which, to the dismay of the deeply caring, community-conscious, entrenched Labour councillors, has provoked strong community resistance and embarrassing publicity. The egregious MP Allan Stewart managed to end his ministerial career by his little piece of post-prandial pick-axe handle waving on behalf of his building contractor friends, but he, of course, is a paid-up Conservative. What are Labour councillors doing promoting urban motorways when the national party is coming out against further road building?

Not content with pushing the M77 through Pollok Park, Strathclyde is now putting in for planning permission to build the M74 extension, a road which will cut through the inner city south of the Clyde to connect with the overloaded and crumbling Kingston Bridge. It is a road promoted by the road-obsessed Scottish office and confirmed by a public local inquiry back in 1989. It will further cut off the south side of Glasgow from the Clyde, attract more traffic to the centre, increase atmospheric pollution and sweep away factories and small businesses as well as seven listed buildings — including the "A" listed Eglinton Engine Works — all at a cost of over £200 million. As the proposal brochure says, "it represents very good value for money".

The thinking for this goes back to the plan for Glasgow prepared in 1945 by the dim city engineer Robert Bruce who, incredibly, proposed the demolition of every single building in the city centre and the construction of an "inner ring arterial" box of roads. Two sides of this box were realised in the 1960s when the M8 was brought, with strategic imbecility, right through the middle of Glasgow, wiping out swathes of residential property and causing wounds which have still not healed. Ever since then the road engineers and their elected acolytes have longed to build the other two sides of the box.

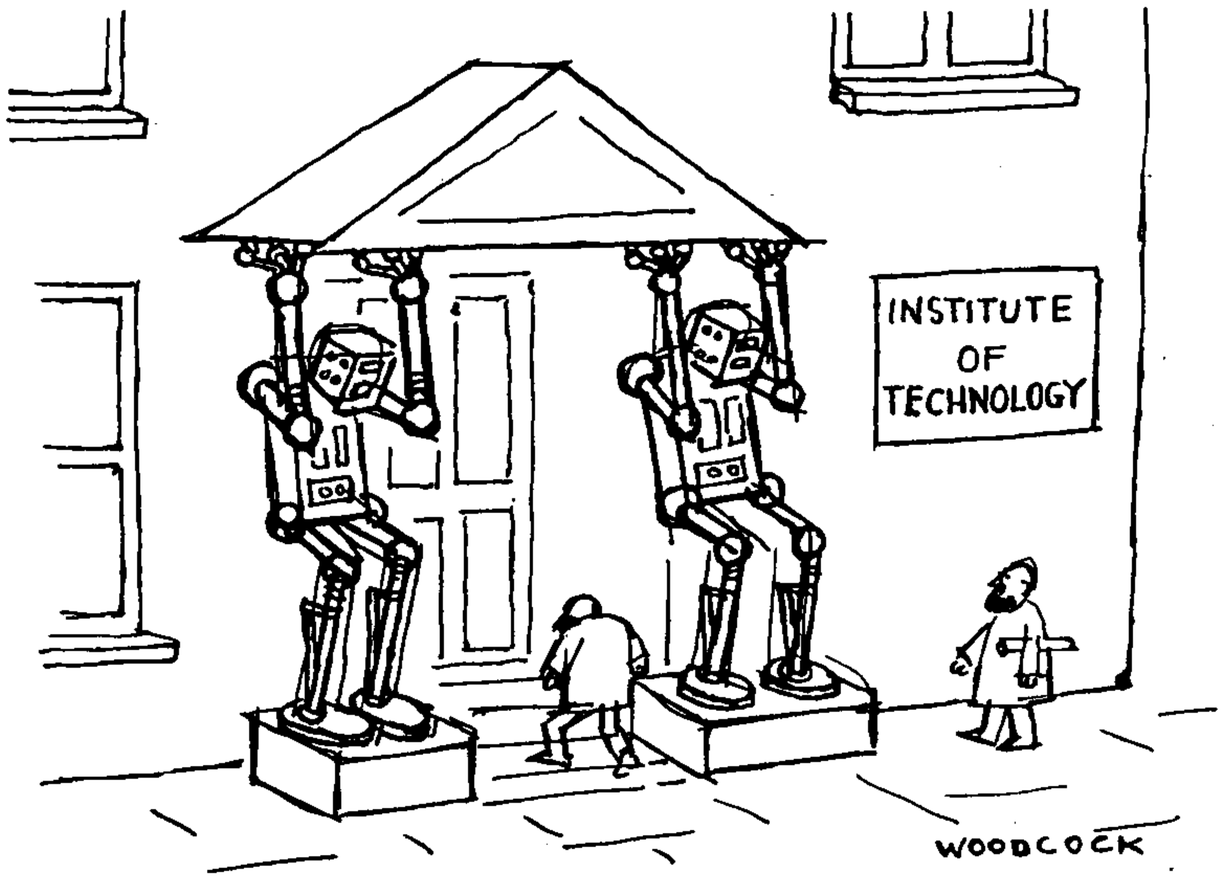
No lessons have been learned. The M74 will create further zones of destruction, and all the engineers can think of doing is planting grass and trees. The motorway will discreetly soar at second floor level above Eglinton Street — the main street on the South Side — and where it meets the existing M8 just south of the Kingston Bridge, a charming spaghetti junction lookalike is to be created. "The amenity of the... Scotland Street Museum [is] likely to be adversely affected", admits the brochure — and this is the famous school by C.R. Mackintosh which narrowly escaped destruction in the 1960s. Now poor old Toshie's masterpiece will overlook the "development of the Kingston Interchange as a sculptured landscape with public open space facilities, structural planting and loci for statuary." The fatuity of this sop to public amenity is breathtaking: who on earth will want to penetrate this polluted green wasteland? And the "statuary"? Perhaps an equestrian figure of "Eur Ing Professor" Donald Carruthers, director of roads for Strathclyde regional council.

However, even Strathclyde region seems to have an inkling that what is proposed is backward, anti-social, destructive and obscenely expensive for the region has simultaneously launched the Glasgow City Centre Millennium Plan "to help improve the environment and make living, studying, working and shopping in Glasgow a more pleasant experience" — unless you live near one of the new motorways, of course.

It is "a plan for developing the traffic and transport related facilities in the city centre in a way that improves the quality of life for everyone," writes Councillor Charles Gordon, "chair of roads and transportation committee". And these proposals to make Glasgow "a leading city in an expanding Europe" are all very sensible: such a pity Coun Gordon does not propose spending more on public transport rather than on the roads with which he is so obsessed. Once upon a time he was a Trotskyite NUR official; now he determinedly promotes "our great car economy" regardless of those many car-less Labour constituents who live in the paths of his motorways. Lady Thatcher would be proud of him; I wonder what made him change his mind?

What is certain is that, if these motorways go ahead, Glasgow, the City of Architecture and Design in 1999, will simply become a European laughing stock in 1999.

'Piloti'



Pseuds Corner

But no. Here was John Travolta removing my coat from my shoulders and personally sliding it onto a hanger, and turning to me with the close-set deep-blue eyes that remind you of the phrase *undivided attention.* Actors' eyes don't blink, unless the actor tells them to; and Travolta's eyes don't blink. For me, it was like stepping into a Warhol poster — a Mao, an Elvis. It was like bumping into Jim Morrison, or Jimi Hendrix. You feel that John Travolta is so iconic that he ought to be dead. And he isn't: not any more.

MARTIN AMIS
Sunday Times Magazine

What is your favourite food?

Breakfast time, dollops of honeycomb from the Taigetos mountains on ewe's milk yoghurt with a bowl of fresh figs.

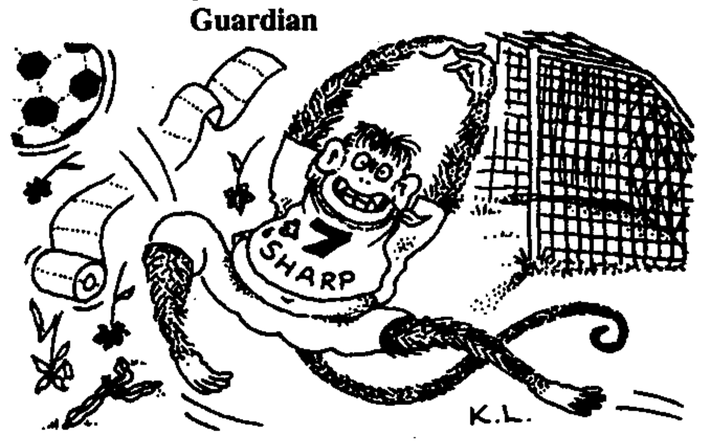
HELEN CHADWICK
The Big Issue

Patsy Kensit had to "suffer" for her role — the director, Philip Haas, ordered her to bleach her pubic hair. She says she would like to work with more directors who demand this kind of commitment.

SIMON MILLS
Sunday Times Magazine

In actual fact, it [an item by Willem de Kooning] isn't really an abstract painting at all. It's a sexual landscape. In the bottom left corner we can make out the tell-tale silhouette of a penis, which implies that the white paint is semen. As such, the jerky nature of the calligraphy makes this an image of gauche, violent, bungled sex. The more measure flow of Pollock's paintings is less alarmingly sexual. They come closer to the rhythm of male urination, as Pollock pointed up when he peed into Peggy Guggenheim's fireplace.

JAMES HALL
Guardian



Cantona is simply a classic example of a passionate and caring male primate displaying protective behaviour towards the woman and unborn child that he loves. If you see him in this context, even his sweeping Grand-Jetes *demonstrate — like the first miraculous kick inside the womb — that there is a kind of symbiosis there between father and unborn child. Far from being reviled, he should be applauded.*

JOHN ISAACS
Guardian

Bhimji will also be exhibiting four lightboxes exploring her fascination with hospitals and with the way that medical science objectifies the body. *Vulnerable and Sticky,* showing fresh brains laid out on a latex sheet, exploits the tradition of elaborate Dutch still-lifes to create a feeling of ambivalence towards its gory subject-matter.

South London Gallery press release

Tarantino's question remains, and remains unanswered. What *did* Travolta *do*? To curl up with a VCR and the Collected Movies 1976-1993 is to witness the trajectory of scandalous decline. In the firmament, the brightest stars have the shortest lives: blue giant to black hole. But the universe isn't old enough to encompass the degeneration which Travolta managed. It will take 20 billion years for our sun to reach its ultimate state, frozen in crystalline indetectability. Travolta did it in 10.

MARTIN AMIS
Sunday Times Magazine

CONTRIBUTORS: R. Taylor, A. Berry, J. James, A. Summers, M. McGann, J. Sanders, Anon.

£10 paid for entries

EYE TV

Beyond Belief (ITV)
The Sunday Show (BBC2)

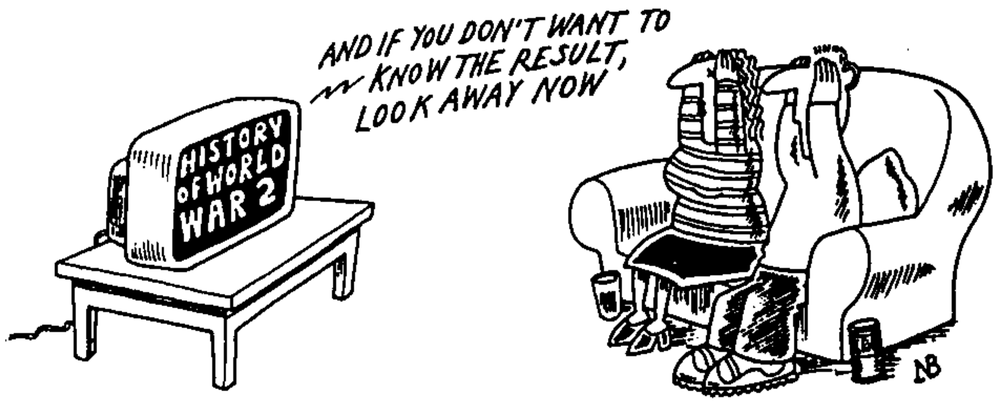
IT IS a sign of how cocky they are getting over at ITV Network Centre — confident that crap-for-cash programming can be pursued with little hassle from the increasingly toothless regulatory bodies — that the titles of the programmes have started openly baiting the elitists and the broadsheet critics. As if to say to their detractors "Go on, say it. See if we care", ITV gave its hour-long tour of the supernatural with Sir David Frost and Uri Geller the name of Beyond Belief.

Frosty started off in comedy and it is just possible he appreciated the humour in making a truly terrible television programme which could legitimately keep telling its audience: "You will not believe what you are seeing!" This post-modernist reading was encouraged by the fact that the show's themes — reality and illusion, and the inexplicability of some phenomena — were eerily underlined by the presence of such a legendary presenter. Is that really David Frost? the viewer kept thinking. What possible logical explanation is there for the sight we are seeing?

Frosty kept stressing that the programme was "live", although he should surely have said "undead". He also kept insisting that such a programme had never been seen on television before, which spooked the hell out of Square Eyes who was totally convinced of having seen it several times before. Take it from me, this déjà-vu thing is truly scary: the absolute certainty that you've seen main guest Uri Geller doing the same stunts as long ago as the seventies, while David Frost keeps telling you that what you're watching is unprecedented.

Uri got stopped watches ticking and curled spoons, although the trick of cracking a smile proved once again beyond him. When a camera went on the blink, Frosty, with a flash of his old speed, joked that supernatural forces had intervened. "Yes. That interference, David, could have been psychic energy...," said Uri, gravely. "Er, well, I was joking...," the presenter muttered, suddenly worried about the electronic phenomenon he'd heard about, of television careers simply vanishing, just like that.

Later, Frosty invited Uri to project telepathically to the viewers the hiding place of the keys to a Honda Civic DX. A viewer who receives the message correctly will win the car. "Oh David," wailed Uri. "I am just *so* telepathic tonight, and the viewers are *so* receptive, I'm just worried *everyone* will get it right." Surrounded by gurus of the supernatural, Sir David reacted with exemplary rationality. "Yeah, well, we'll have a draw if there are a lot of correct answers..."



Next morning, on his regular gig *Breakfast With Frost*, the host did his most aggressive interview for about 10 years: with a lawyer on the subject of confidentiality in rape cases. It was quite spooky, the sudden return of his old edge. Do you think he'd had some kind of terrible vision of his future? Meanwhile, after *Beyond Belief*, stand by for series from the ITV Network Centre called *Pile of Crap* and *Money for Old Rope*.

The Sunday Show, BBC2's new lunchtime series, will also make an interesting subject for anyone writing a thesis on the titles of television programmes. It sounds like a religious programme, probably hosted by Alan Titchmarsh. In fact, the dull title must be another bit of would-be post-modernism as the content is dementedly wacky. Co-hosted by Donna McPhail and an American called Kate, this is a yoof show, although it looks dangerously close at times to spoof yoof TV.

As with most current programmes, the format depends on a visual recreation of a news and a current affairs show and a deliberate verbal demolition of the same genre. "Welcome," says Donna, "to a sort of television enema for that Sunday blockage... And, on the day that the chancellor announced a cut in inheritance tax, we've decided that's a load of cack and here are the real news headlines..." Essentially, everyone pretends to be American, except for Kate, who really is. There is a spoof showbiz reporter called Dennis Pennis. Bienvenida, Lady Buck, is interviewed at length about the romantic prospects of Michelle in *EastEnders*. Wacky or what?

The problem with spoof news formats is that they can only send up news techniques: as *The Day Today* beautifully did for BBC2. Here, though, they are used to send up the world at large and it doesn't work. You simply didn't know whether Hugh Grant being rude to "Dennis Pennis" was a set-up; whether the "American chastity belts" are a real product or a satirical invention; whether an interview given by LaToya Jackson was a real one or clips from prior interviews recut to spoof questions in another fashionable current trick.

In fact *The Sunday Show* may well be the last gasp of this style. With two libel suits — from Jimmy Savile and Petula Clark — now resulting from a single edition of Chris Morris's Radio 1 show, the grandaddy of this format, expect a BBC producer's advisory on "spoof news" any week now.

'Square Eyes'

MEDIA NEWS

THE £1.5 million "true-life" drama about the killing of army wife Penny McAllister, screened on ITV two weeks ago, has been widely condemned as a tasteless bit of exploitation. McAllister's grieving father accused the film-makers of "profiting from tragedy".

At Lord Rothermere's Associated Newspapers, however, *Beyond Reason* was greeted with unalloyed enthusiasm. On 16 February the *Daily Mail* carried a full-page preview of this "compelling two-hour television drama". The following weekend, its sister paper the *Mail on Sunday* devoted no fewer than three pages to an "exclusive preview of a gripping new TV film" which was "set to captivate millions of viewers".

Oddly, neither paper bothered to mention that the programme was made by Kensington Films, a subsidiary of Associated Newspapers — or that its executive producer, Rod "Mad" Gilchrist, is also deputy editor of the *Mail on Sunday*.

TO MARK the launch of the new TV station European Business News, Will Hutton of the *Guardian* wrote a long feature last week about money programmes on TV.

His conclusions were pretty gloomy: "Business news takes place behind closed doors. There aren't any dramatic pictures, and the discussions and dilemmas are essentially private." Even the Barings affair, he argued, "does not lend itself to TV journalism".

Hutton could have strengthened his case by citing the disastrous example of the Zurich-based European Business Channel, which was launched with a lot of hype in November 1988 but collapsed two years later amid a welter of debts and recriminations.

Strangely, however, he didn't even mention it. Surely this cannot have anything to do with the fact that one of EBC's founders was a certain Will Hutton?

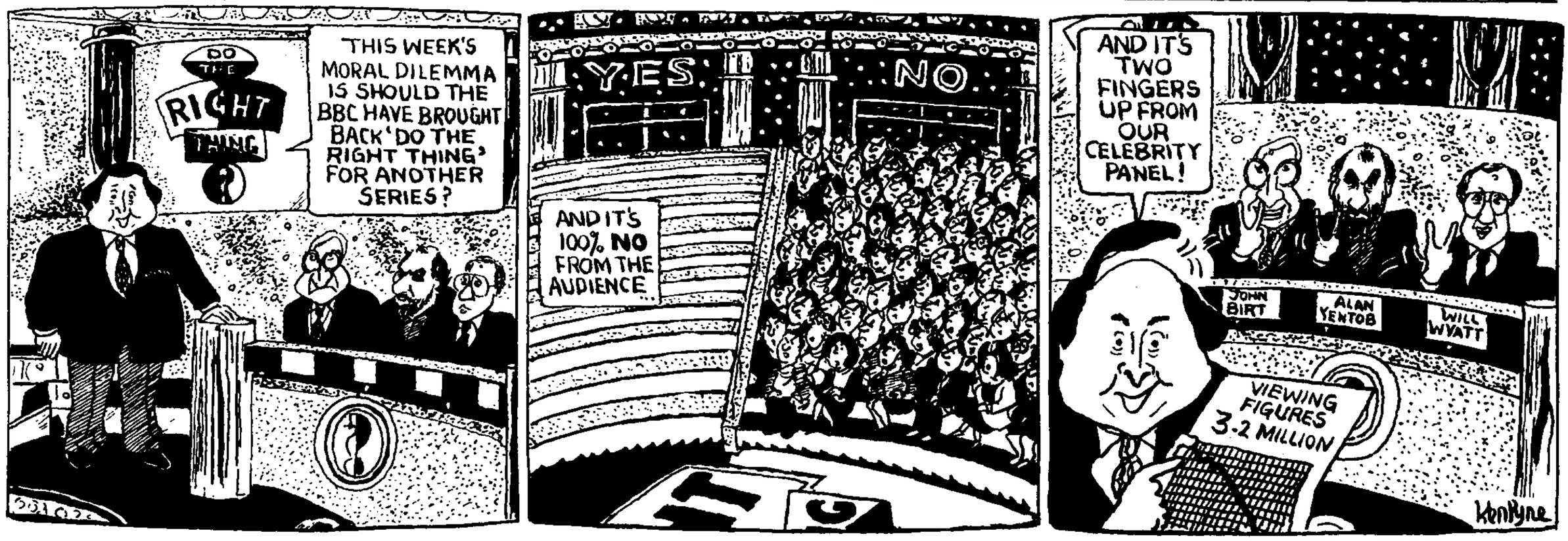
TWO documentaries about the late, great Jacqueline Dupre were transmitted within two days. BBC2 broadcast its offering on 14 January, produced by the French-based Christopher Nupen of Allegro films.

Two days earlier Channel 4 had shown *Remembering Jacqueline Dupre*. This was produced by one Christopher Nupen of Allegro Films. Funnily enough the documentaries shared much of the same footage...

HUMBUG OF THE WEEK

JILLY COOPER was an obvious choice when the *Observer* wanted a talking head to answer the question: "Would you like to see more sex on television?"

"They shouldn't put in sex just for the sake of titillation," responded the writer whose own work has been adapted for TV and whose own moist pen, in *The Man Who Made Husbands Jealous*, produced lines like: "Plunging his face into her pubic hair like a truffle pig... as joyously as an otter diving into a summer stream he plunged his cock inside her..." and so on.


DO THE RIGHT THING
THIS WEEK'S MORAL DILEMMA IS SHOULD THE BBC HAVE BROUGHT BACK 'DO THE RIGHT THING' FOR ANOTHER SERIES?
YES
NO
AND IT'S 100% NO FROM THE AUDIENCE
AND IT'S TWO FINGERS UP FROM OUR CELEBRITY PANEL!
JOHN BIRT
ALAN YENTOB
WILL WYATT
VIEWING FIGURES 3-2 MILLION
KenHyne

BIRTSPEAK

IN AN attempt to improve its manners and image, a glossy BBC leaflet called *Courtesy Guidelines* has landed on staff desks.

First, it asks the important question: "Who do you work for?" Once staff have worked out this conundrum, they are reminded of the intricate subtleties of public relations. "Make time to talk to callers" and "Offer to call back", it urges sensibly. Listeners and viewers will no doubt be delighted to learn that resources have been diverted from programme-making to create this invaluable guide.

THE BBC Helpline was launched recently to a deafening silence from the press.

Designed to offer listeners a permanent free helpline giving information on BBC stations nationwide, at a mere £5 million a year (from the director-general's development fund) it is a bargain.

Meanwhile the BBC remains intent on closing local stations like Radio Coventry and Radio Warwickshire, where action desks have been part of the scenery for years. They connected local listeners to local organisations and were often staffed by volunteers. They cost the BBC virtually nothing to run.

RADIO 3's studio managers, the backroom figures responsible for the station's output, have come in for some criticism of late.

David Ammon, accounts manager at Radio Production Resources, expressed concern at the "utilization" of these managers: their workload was seen to be way below par and they were therefore deemed a handicap to the economic viability of the department.

This was a surprise to the operational manager who has been reluctantly requiring his staff to work a record amount of overtime over the past six months.

After a closer examination of the computer records, the mystery was solved. The genius who had programmed the invoicing software hadn't got it right. The computer programme failed to account for outside broadcasts carried out over the year, so 14,000 hours of studio managers' work had been overlooked, amounting to £420,000 of departmental money.

WITH the expensive recruitment of Chris "Big Breakfast" Evans to Radio One, the stricken national pop station needs to save money.

The Birtian efficiency drives, performance checks and general cuts have of course left little margin, so a brand new money-saving mechanism has been introduced, demonstrating that creative minds are still at work in Broadcasting House.

Pinned to every noticeboard is the message: "Save energy... Get switched on by switching off... It's simple". Yes it is — as millions of now non-Radio One listeners can attest.

HACKWATCH: STEPHEN FRY'S EXCELLENT ADVENTURE

23 FEBRUARY: Hold the front page! "Fry Quits Drama After Duff Reviews," the *Guardian* announces, accurately. Other papers are rather more melodramatic. "Fears For Stephen Fry After He Quits Play," the *Independent* reports. "FRY CRACKS UP" screams the *Sun*.

The stories have been prompted by a statement from the playwright Simon Gray, who says he is concerned about "the safety and well-being" of the actor. "It is obvious that he is a man in emotional turmoil," Gray warns, "and that his sudden departure is the culmination of years of pressure, overwork and unrelenting, self-sacrificing generosity."

At *Today*, whose front page carries the headline "STEPHEN FRY DISAPPEARS: West End Sensation", editorial executives are aghast to discover that the subject of Christopher Wilson's weekly "Poison Pen" essay in that day's paper is none other than the "infantile" Stephen Fry, who is denounced as "a tremendous show-off" reeking of "the deep stench of sanctimony". "He would," the article concludes, "almost certainly be hurt by Poison Pen's observations."

It is too late to keep this out of the first edition; in later editions, however, the "Poison Pen" logo is hastily replaced by the more emollient phrase "Pen Portrait", and the feature itself is entirely rewritten. Fry is now described as "the epitome of an eccentric English gentleman" and a "thoroughly nice chap". "There are, it seems, no limits to his talents," *Today* now opines.

The *Daily Mirror* is even quicker off the mark. Its big news story about Fry's disappearance is embellished by an instant opinion from a shrink, who offers some valuable professional insight: "An actor can be devastated if he considers a role is not successful, said psychologist Jane Firbank last night." Who would have thought it?

There is also an "open letter" to Fry from the *Mirror*'s TV critic, Jaci Stephen. "I reacted with stunned disbelief at your decision to leave the play *Cell Mates*," she wails. "I find it distressing that someone with so much talent should ever suffer doubts as to their ability... you are admired and loved... you are loved and admired..."

24 February: By now the pundits are firing on all cylinders. *Daily Mail* theatre critic Jack Tinker offers a full-page analysis of the "emotional turmoil" of Stephen Fry. "Much nonsense and psychobabble has been written about the basic instinct to perform," he writes, before adding some psycho-hackery of his own: Fry is "clearly a man at war within himself".

In the *Times*, Libby Purves gives her diagnosis: "Without yielding to the temptation of psychobabble, I would point out that on my own rough scale of performer-paranoia risk, he scores four bullseyes." The showbiz editor of the *Daily Express*, David Wigg, also displays his talents as an amateur psychologist. Overwork was probably one cause of Fry's disappearance, but "insecurity may have played its part". Chris Hutchins of *Today* takes us on a journey "inside the tortured soul of Stephen Fry".

Messrs Tinker, Wigg and Hutchins all take the opportunity to tell us that they have met Fry from time to time and are therefore well qualified to provide expert assessments. Not to be outdone, *Telegraph* hack James Delingpole reports that he once had dinner with Stephen Fry, five years ago. Fry paid for the wine — thereby proving, according to Delingpole, that he is "enlightened and kind".

The *Grauniad* appears unable to find anyone on its staff who has such telling first-hand details. So it interviews an "arts psychologist" who remarks that "Stephen Fry is a creative artist... He has simultaneously had bad reviews for both *Cell Mates* and his TV show, and the combination of both is a shock." Fancy!

Even the sober old *Indescribablyboring* gets in on the act, with a full-page "investigation" of Fry's state of mind. "He feels there is no one with whom he could share his depression," the paper discloses. "The man with so many faces to his public life, and so much to give in his friendships, has no private forum in which to play out his personal crises."

The *Daily Mirror* wonders if graphology might provide a clue. It shows a copy of his signature to

"Britain's most senior handwriting specialist", Erik Rees, who concludes that the actor is "torn apart" by his emotions. A squiggle at the end of Fry's surname reveals "upheavals and trauma". Meanwhile, in a leader-page article in the London *Evening Standard*, Ned Sherrin proposes that "we should all go on strike for Stephen" — the "we" in question being the luvvies. Journalists should be banned from theatres for the next six months, to punish them for their reviews of *Cell Mates*.

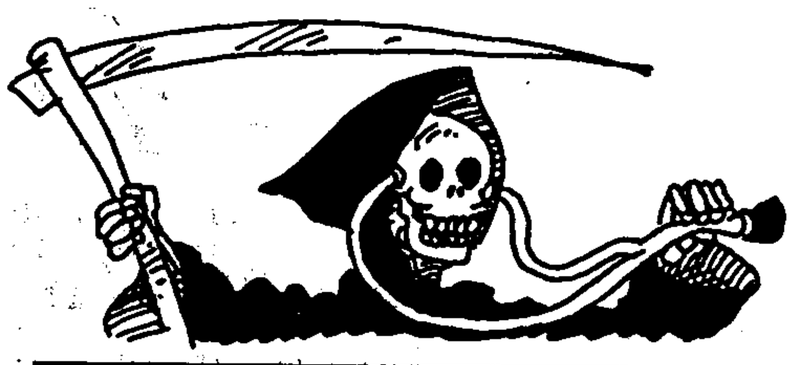
25 February: Sensational news — Fry has sent a fax apologising for his sudden flight. "I'm a silly old fool and I don't deserve this attention," he rightly observes. This important development is given extensive front-page treatment in the broadsheets and tabloids, most of whom quote his lengthy fax message in full. The *Telegraph*'s arts correspondent praises it as "a beautifully written monologue".

Dominic Lawson, editor of the *Spectator*, joins the lists of hacks who are keen to boast that they have met Fry and therefore have some special insight into his soul. "I know Stephen Fry only through a shared passion for chess, but from that slight acquaintance I suspect that he is too rational a man to contemplate the suicide that some have predicted." *Today* announces rather pompously that it "will respect Stephen Fry's request to be given privacy at this time"; on the same page, however, it invites a "top psychologist" to analyse Fry's message. He reaches the amazing conclusion that the actor has been suffering from "acute stress".

26 February: At last the Sunday papers get their turn. John Peter, the *Sunday Times* theatre reviewer, comes up with a typical profundity: "The artist-critic relationship is difficult." In the *Mail on Sunday*, Sir John Junor says Fry has shown us "that under the facade he is desperately vulnerable... Clearly he is still in a state of black depression and quivering insecurity, as indeed perhaps he has been for most of his turbulent, brilliant life". The *Observer* critic Michael Coveney agrees that Fry is "vulnerable" — "enormously talented" but "enormously fragile". In the *Sunday Telegraph*, Mary Kenny also notes that Fry is "fragile", possibly because he was "psychologically formed in the post-Dr Spock era". Her fellow-Glenda at the *Sunday Telegraph*, Minette Marrin, has little to say about Fry, and so pads out her column by quoting a recent article from the *Guardian*. The *Telegraph* even deems the subject worthy of an editorial, headed "Critical State".

The *Independent on Sunday* fills a whole page with a reprint of an interview with Fry which it first published only two weeks earlier. Perhaps aware that its readers expect something more than warmed-up leftovers, it allows its new columnist, Harry Enfield, to dwell on the big issue as well. His conclusion: Stephen Fry should "focus" his undoubted talents more narrowly. "Professionally, he has spread himself too thin." Unlike Enfield, of course, who merely spreads himself all over television programmes, books and regular newspaper columns.

2 March: Simon Gray, the author of *Cell Mates*, finally loses patience. He issues a statement attacking the fugitive star for behaving in "the most cowardly fashion" and condemns the press for wasting its sympathy on Fry's "squalid little story". Presumably he has forgotten that the whole brouhaha was sparked off by an alarmist statement issued only a few days earlier by... Simon Gray. And now he tells us it was all a fuss about nothing! Too late, alas: according to a computation by the London *Evening Standard*, Fleet Street has already devoted no fewer than 5,365 column inches to Stephen Fry's disappearance. What does this say about the Fourth Estate's priorities? Perhaps a "top psychologist" might care to enlighten us.



DOING THE ROUNDS

THREE leading Tory GPs were prime movers in the government's 1990 GP contract which has demoralised the profession and resulted in the lowest intake of trainees since 1979. Where are they now?

Paul Lambden, a first wave fundholder in Hertfordshire, gave up in 1992 to become the £80,000-a-year chief executive of **East Hertfordshire community trust**, from which he has just resigned.

David Todd, founder member of the national association of fund-holding practices, is retiring this year. And Clive Froggatt, one-time adviser to Mrs Thatcher, has resigned from his practice while awaiting trial at Bristol crown court on charges of deception in the possession and use of heroin.

All three will doubtless continue to offer advice to Mrs Bottomley.

● THE snappily named **South Yorkshire ambulance and paramedic service NHS trust**, is having problems answering calls because its database of addresses is incomplete. An ambulance recently took 40 minutes to get to a heart attack victim... because the computer could not locate his house.

● SURGEONS at **London's Guy's hospital** have threatened to stop work if their intensive care unit closes as planned in 1996. Twenty seven out of 30 decided it would be dangerous to operate without the back-up of intensive care. So *why* do they do it in private hospitals?

● DOCTORS and nurses are not the only ones fed up with health service reforms. Lynn Samuel, chief executive of **Surrey ambulance trust**, is leaving to work in the private sector. He is the second chief officer to go in less than two years. **Moray health services trust** chief executive Elizabeth Hogg has also resigned, as has **Glasgow's Stobhill trust** chief executive Maggie Boyle.

● DISTRICT auditors have finally spotted that the £400,000 secondhand MRI scanner bought for **London's Brook hospital** in May 1993 (*Eyes passim*) is completely useless.

● IN 1988 Hospital Design Consortium, a firm of consulting engineers, paid the **Welsh health common services authority** £5.9 million in recognition of massive design faults in **Ysbyty Gwynedd Hospital** in **Bangor**. Now HDC plans to bid for WHCSA's building division when it goes out to tender.

● **DARLINGTON memorial hospital's** medical advisory committee has recommended that all job application forms should be kept anonymous to avoid racial bias in the appointment procedures. The managers have however rejected the proposal because it wasn't "helpful or practicable".

● A PATIENT at a non-fundholding practice in **Muswell Hill** has been given priority treatment at **London's Whittington Hospital**... but only because her practice was mis-classified on the hospital computer as a fundholder. The same hospital has also lost a £1 million cheque to the Inland Revenue. Meanwhile, patients at **Oxford's Burford surgery**, who were offered a referendum on fundholding, have voted against the idea.

● PAUL LEWIS is chairman of the **Royal College of Midwives employment affairs committee**, which exists to "protect members in the most effective way possible." He is also director of midwifery at **London's Chelsea and Westminster hospital**, which recently made all G-grade midwives reapply for their jobs. Many were unsuccessful, and were either given lower paid F-grade posts or invited to leave.

● VALERIE McINTOSH, a district nursing sister at **Cornwall healthcare trust**, has made 81 complaints to management about the stress to patients and staff caused by cuts in staffing levels. She has been suspended.

● KEVIN NORRIS, who suffered 40 percent burns in a crash on the M25, was taken by ambulance to **Chase farm hospital**. Unfortunately the hospital has no burns unit. **Billericay hospital** and **Mount Vernon hospital** were both unable to take him, and he was eventually taken to **University College hospital** — after just a three and a half hour wait.

● MIRIAMA Hikuwai-Boyack joins Sue Wakefield and Jonathan Secker-Walker as the third general manager to be sacked at **London's University College hospitals trust** in 12 months.

And "multiskilling" proposals for porters to take blood samples and clerks to test urine specimens have been supplemented with others for domestics to repair ward equipment (previously the job of engineers) and receptionists (or "trainee clinical support assistants") to take temperatures and pulses.

● IN *EYE* 865, it was stated that GPs in Bromsgrove were pulling out of a total fundholding project because of the extra administration. This is untrue. Whilst the fundholding partner in one of the practices is retiring, the scheme itself is continuing.

And in *Eye* 860, MD complained about his (or her) lack of purchasing muscle in trying to secure a hip replacement for a long-suffering elderly man at **Birmingham's Royal Orthopaedic hospital**, and that "pigs might fly out of MD's arse" if it happened in the near future. Within a month, the gentleman was called in for his operation and is more than satisfied with the result. Fly piggy, fly.

M.D.

The Mollusc Rights activists lay in wait for Molly Malone

DOWN ON THE FARM

NO SOONER had limited quantities of the delicious Lanark Blue cheese been allowed back on the market after its troubles with Listeria (*Eye* 866) than Clydesdale council hygiene police moved in to close down the operation permanently.

Originally it had been agreed with the owner of the Lanark Blue marque, Humphrey Errington, that no action would be taken before laboratory results from current testing were in, to which effect no proceedings had been proposed until late last week.

But despite instructions from Lanark JP Mrs Elizabeth Wilson that experts should investigate and discuss the relevance of the findings of Listeria in this cheese, the hygiene police jumped the gun and seized the bulk of the remaining cheese, valued at more than £50,000, before laboratory tests had been complete. This forced the justice to make a decision as to whether it should be condemned.

In concert with the department of stealth (aka health) and its clone the public health laboratory service (PHLS), a proposed court hearing was brought forward a week with the PHLS's top expert on Listeria, Dr Jim McLauchlin, drafted in as star witness.

McLauchlin was not troubled by something as fundamental to justice as a tedious cross-examination, so he was clear on the day to conjure up reams of statistics, charts and scientific papers, presenting Clydesdale's case with all the aplomb of a schoolmaster addressing a group of primary school kids. This left the defence to scrabble through the "evidence" while also trying to listen to his case.

Nevertheless while majoring on the general risks to health from consuming Listeria-contaminated food, the one issue McLauchlin failed to address was whether Lanark Blue was a risk to health. Instead he claimed that all strains of *Listeria monocytogenes* (*Lm*) were harmful, at one point arguing against a scientific paper which stated the opposite — written by himself some years previously.

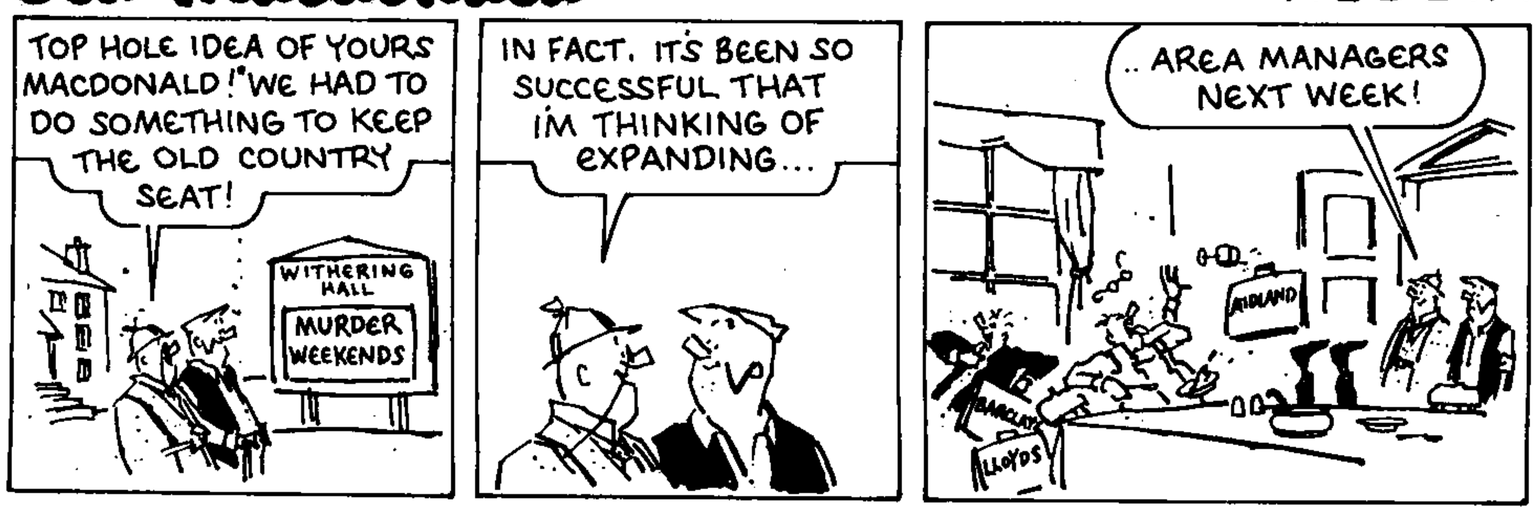
Errington's robust lawyer, a QC called Michael Jones, was able to produce copious scientific evidence that different strains of *Lm* varied considerably in effect, ranging from the highly virulent to plain harmless, adding that more than 63,000 portions of Lanark Blue with Listeria had been sold without complaint. The PHLS, on the other hand, had not been able to demonstrate any increase in Listeria food poisoning — much less than any illness from the strain found in Lanark Blue.

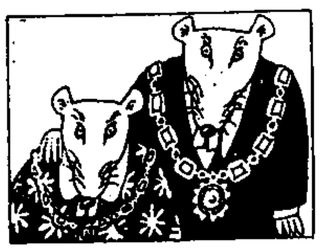
Impervious to these arguments, McLauchlin and his friends dismissed the claims as "no evidence" that the strain of Listeria found in Lanark Blue was not harmful, asking the justice to destroy £50,000-worth of cheese simply on the *assumption* that it might be.

All this left Justice Wilson totally bemused. She left the court without making a decision, promising to let the warring factions know within 10 days. Meanwhile, as the fate of Lanark Blue hangs in the balance, specialist cheesemakers throughout the country are wondering whether their industry has a future. Not one of them can ever guarantee that they will never have Listeria in their own cheeses, and fall prey to the hygiene pliceo in the same way as Humphrey Errington.

'New Muckspreader'

Old Macdonald


TOP HOLE IDEA OF YOURS MACDONALD! WE HAD TO DO SOMETHING TO KEEP THE OLD COUNTRY SEAT!
WITHERING HALL
MURDER WEEKENDS
IN FACT, IT'S BEEN SO SUCCESSFUL THAT I'M THINKING OF EXPANDING...
ALBERT
.. AREA MANAGERS NEXT WEEK!
MIDLAND
BARCLAYS
LLOYDS



THE Rotten Borough Advertiser

A BENT AFFAIR

LIFE is growing nasty in barmy Bent where Labour recently took control for two weeks.

At the time of the coup, the press reported how Tory councillor Richard Buckley was too ill to attend the crucial meeting, allowing the 33 Labour and Liberal Democrat members to oust the 32 Tories.

What has not be reported is the unpleasant smear campaign against Buckley, who is competing with Bent Tory leader Bob Blackman for Rhodes Boyson's Bent North parliamentary seat.

Shortly before the Labour coup, Buckley's wife was told by one of the Blackman camp (without Blackman's knowledge, natch) that her husband was "having an affair with a senior Bent female officer". This left Buckley, already ill, in no fit state to attend the crucial meeting.

The allegation against Buckley is untrue, but the rumours of Ugandan discussions caused much friction in the town hall and led to acting chief executive Peter Raine warning councillors not to repeat the accusation on pain of urgent action from m'learned friends.

But who has come out worse from the Tories' temporary demise — Blackman or Buckley? Though Buckley was absent — he and his supporters claim he would have needed a stretcher to attend — it was Tory leader Blackman who presided over Labour's victory.

LABOUR DOES THE SPLITS

THE Nolan commission into standards in public life has been learning about sleaze in local government thanks to a report on the bizarre goings-on at South Tyneside council.

Written by one of the bitter factions in the Labour group there (and sent to Nolan by sneaky South Shields Conservative Association), the report tells a tawdry tale.

It begins in 1990 when the Labour group split. Since then 26 Labour councillors have been suspended from membership of the group. One councillor was suspended for speaking against a decision not to fund a centre in his ward; another fell foul of the leadership after he was accused of faxing a story about a meeting to a local paper. All the suspensions or expulsions were later reduced or overturned on appeal.

The report criticises the council for its high spending: not on local resources but on the councillors. It spends £2,250 a week to send councillors to conferences, and some have been on trips as far afield as Japan. This is more than any other Tyne and Wear council, even though South Tyneside is the smallest.

The two warring Labour factions have now become increasingly vicious. One council meeting ended in a punch-up between former deputy leader of the council Stephen Hepburn and Councillor Iain Malcolm. Some labour members are now apoplectic at the news that Jarrow MP Don Dixon, standing down at the next election, has named Hepburn as his heir.

UNEQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

ATTEMPTS to thwart the appointment of Heather Rabbatts as Lambeth chief executive have intensified as her April Fool's Day start date approaches.

The hung council's 16-strong Tory group has appealed to the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) to stop her recruitment, the head of the CRE being Herman Ouseley, the former Lambeth chief exec. The Tories argue that Lambeth is breaking its own equal opportunities policy (EOP) in allowing Rabbatts to bring two colleagues with her from Merton.

Rabbatts, a black barrister, expected a furore in a place like Lambeth and so made it a condition of accepting the job that she could bring colleagues in without a fuss. The reason Rabbatts made this a condition was that she has no idea who, if anyone, she can trust in the borough — a problem with which the interim-CE Sari Conway and Ouseley can probably sympathise.

The race equality commission has now written to Conway and told her to suspend Rabbatt's appointment while it investigates whether Lambeth has broken its own EOP and whether it is in breach of the 1976 race relations act.

LESSONS IN WASTE

WHILE Liverpool city council tries to make up a £44 million deficit with the highest council tax bill in the land for the second year running, voters continue to ask why they must pay more for fewer services.

Some waste can certainly be traced to the education directorate, which spends nearly half the council budget. Its director Frank Cogley is no stranger to the *Eye*, which first raised the £200,000 interest-free loan he received from the council to buy a house on Merseyside.

Cogley has still not paid all the loan back after five years, and following its recent mention in the *Sunset Times* (better late than never) has taken to wandering the corridors looking for a shoulder to cry on. The new finance chair, Councillor Frank Prendergast, is supposedly pledged to put an end to cosy financial arrangements wangled by fat-cat officers in the past.

Nor has Cogley's appointment of able deputies been a big success. Clive Lawton, his choice as deputy director, had to be "seconded out" on full pay. Cogley also lost his acting child inspector Brendan Murden when the latter failed his Ofsted training — yes, another secondment, working at home on full pay for a year!

Concern has been expressed too at the continual "reorganisation" of Cogley's management team. It happens once every two years and results in the "regrading" of top posts and consequent salary rises. The present one appeared to have been knocked back by councillors — but it didn't stop more than 38 officers receiving "special payments" and "honoraria" of up to £5,000 each. No doubt councillors will be delighted when they find out about this.

Still, at least Frank Cogley's son is lucky: he doesn't have to go to a school on his father's patch. Using the money borrowed from Liverpool council, Cogley bought a house in Heswell on the Wirral. This means his son attends Caldy grammar school and Cogley's own council tax bill is much lower!

IN BRIEF

ENFIELD: So farewell chief executive Maralyn Arnold, upset at all the embarrassing disciplinary inquiries — like the one into property services director Marilyn Hands, who gave her deputy a big redundancy pay-off. And farewell leisure director Keith Stevens, who resigned in the middle of a long investigation into why his department lost £30,000 in an English civil war battle reenactment. Soon there will be no one left...

FALKIRK: Come on down Dennis Goldie, Labour leader of the local authority with the longest council house waiting list in the UK: he owns a whole five ex-council homes! He and his wife bought their own in 1988 for £10,640. Then Mrs G's aunt bought her flat for £9,400 in 1989 — which was transferred to the Goldies three years later. In 1990 Mrs G's mother bought her house for £5,775 — which was transferred to the councillor and his wife, er, three years later. Goldie has declared an interest in two others: one bought in 1993, the other last year.

PRESCELI-PEMBROKE: Council officials have handed out more than £700,000 public money to local firms without authorisation for such things as a private car-park in Broad Haven (the council isn't collecting the fees); the tarmacing of roads; and the laying of footpaths in the Pembrokeshire countryside. A spokesman admits: "None of the work appears to have been ordered." While heads roll and top officers are suspended, Neil Devonald, director of works for "central division", has resigned on "ill-health grounds" and is getting tablets from Dr Dai Knacker.

LAMBETH: The smell coming from the new (six months old) £22,000 mayoral limo is so strong that Labour mayor Pauline Watson asked for a new one. Her request was met with derision and she was told to write a report on the matter. Her paper, with spelling mistakes, was then distributed to members who said "no" to a new car and "yes" to cutting the mayoral allowance by 80 percent to £2,000.

WATER NEWS

YORKSHIRE Water's cunning ploy to save millions of pounds on sewage treatment has been rumbled by the European commission.

It wanted to drop a planned £200 million secondary sewage treatment plant at Saltend on the River Humber after the department of the environment surprisingly redesignated the Humber estuary as "coastal water".

Under European legislation sewage going into coastal waters needs only cheaper primary treatment — the dubious idea being that the sea will disperse the crap, chemicals and condoms far and wide. This certainly doesn't happen in estuaries, as the European environment commissioner Ritt Bjerregaard has now pointed out, so it's back to the drawing board for poor old Yorkshire Water.

Still, the good news for company bosses is that its bills are to rise by 7 percent. As chancellor Kenneth Clarke said, low inflation means people don't need to... er... pay rises every year, do they?

HUSBAND
OK what type of career do you have in mind?
I want to be a serial killer
CAREER
Ho Ho.. a serial killer.. very good Har Har!
CAREER
er.. yes of course I'll see what we've got in.
CAREER

UN SPECIAL

IT IS always good to see gullible British journalists seizing at official leaks, even from the UN.

Despite plausible denials from Nato of "hearings", not "sightings", of cargo aircraft near Bosnian government positions in Tuzla, hacks insisted on running Unprofor leaks that these were from a US government supply mission to the Bosnian army.

By an amazing coincidence, the spurious reports completely drove out of the headlines the *actual* sightings of 62 helicopter supply missions from Serbia to the Serb forces in Bosnia, which just happened to take place when UN monitors were prevented from observing the radar screens in Yugoslav airports.

UN officials proceeded to cast doubt on the helicopters which had been seen — while affirming the reality of the cargo planes that which had only been "heard"!

They pointed out that Nato had not told them about the training flights it was carrying out in the area. Whether this was true or not, it would be understandable. General Rose's last act in Sarajevo included an attempt to hand over Nato flight plans to the Serbs, even though the latter had shot down several Nato flights, including an RAF Harrier.

There is method in this madness. Caught out in such a blatant breach of UN security council resolutions, Serbia *should* have suffered an immediate reimposition of sanctions for the helicopter resupply. However, Britain, France and Russia are counting on suspected Serbian war criminal Slobodan Milosevic to deliver a peace plan by forcing his bloodstained surrogates in Bosnia to give up a little of their ethnically cleansed conquests so the invention of elusive American supply aircraft allowed them to muddy the otherwise straightforward issues. The sanctions stayed off.

● HOW, anyway, can Unprofor be expected to cope in the former Yugoslavia when it can barely protect itself? Millions of pounds are being lost through the continued theft and misappropriation of UN property.

Soon after Unprofor's arrival in Bosnia, ammunition supplied to the UN began finding its way to the protagonists. Nor has all humanitarian aid reached those for whom it was intended. Now an alarming increase in vehicle thefts is disrupting UN operations and eroding the already fragile credibility of the peacekeeping mission.

Vehicle "hijackings" or thefts occur throughout Bosnia and the Republic of Serbian Krajina (RSK). But the problem is causing major concern in "sector north", where since May 1993 there have been at least 41 reported cases resulting in the loss of 35 vehicles in addition to equipment and personal property.

The situation has deteriorated even further since Croatian President Franjo Tudjman's call for the UN to quit Croatia. No doubt anticipating a last-minute rush, anyone with the desire to own an almost-new Toyota, Nissan or any of half a dozen other makes, including the all-time favourite, a Cherokee Jeep, can do so simply by demanding one from the usually terrified UN driver. Since 1 January in sector north alone there have been at least 17 incidents resulting in the theft of 12 vehicles including an armoured Toyota Land Cruiser and an armoured Mercedes. As the majority of vehicles are commandeered by armed and uniformed men, and because of the reluctance of the local militia to intervene in such cases, it has been suggested that most thefts are being carried out by the RSK army. Significantly the Croats have also accused the Serbs of using UN vehicles for reconnaissance.

● MEANWHILE some Unprofor staff have carried on doing what they do best: backbiting and picking up big paychecks. But it has all become too much even for the UN and several key members of the antipodean managerial mafia (see *Eyes passim*) led by Kiwi Jim Baldie have now been moved on to new — or more often no, positions. (UN auditors noticed that the interminable management training courses they ran only benefited bank accounts in the white Commonwealth south of the equator.)

● ELSEWHERE the UN celebrates its 50th anniversary in style. In Somalia, one of the last people out was a senior transport official who would doubtless have received a medal for his bravery — if his tardiness had not been down to the Kenyan police. They wanted to discuss all the illegally traded ivory spotted in his advance baggage.

CHURCH TIMES

THE Rt Rev William Westwood, Bishop of Peterborough and star of *Thought for the Day*, is a most self-important fellow.

He insists, for instance, on being known as "Dr" Westwood, and is so proud of the title he has had the letters "Ll.D" carved in gilt on his cathedral stall. One would hardly guess that it is in fact a honorary doctorate from Nene College, an incredibly obscure further education establishment in Northampton. No wonder he is nicknamed "Little Billy Bullshit" throughout the diocese.

Little Billy's self-importance took a dreadful knock last year when he was lampooned in *The Spiritual Quest of Francis Wagstaffe*, a Henry Root-style book of spoof letters to eminent churchmen. And he was even more furious when he learned that one of the co-authors was the Rev David Johnson, rector of the Northamptonshire village of Cogenhoe — which falls within his diocese. Westwood retaliated by issuing a "personal interdict" forbidding Lord Runcie, the former Archbishop of Canterbury, from carrying out a long-planned visit to Cogenhoe.

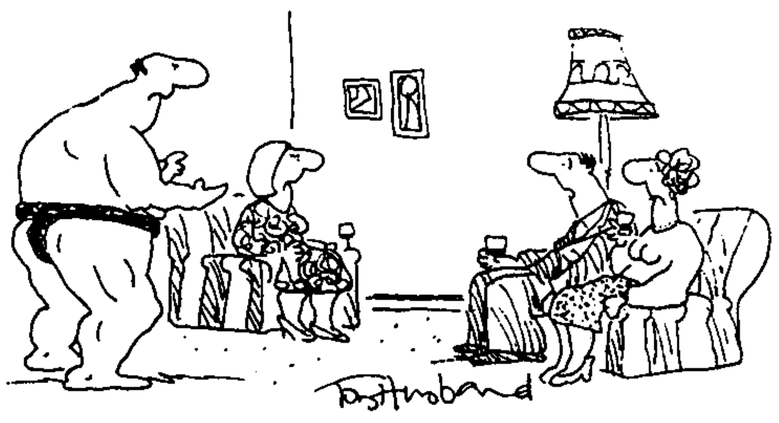
The Bishop is now intending to order a full consistory court to deal with the errant priest. The charge? That Johnson did conduct a cremation without due care and attention, by not pressing the button which would despatch the coffin to the flames.

Some such incident did indeed happen. The only flaw in the prosecution case is that Johnson was not meant to press the button; that task fell to some other functionary, who had apparently dozed off.

The case will probably take two years to come to court, by which time the unlovable bishop will be nothing but a vague memory: he is due to retire on 28 December this year, Holy Innocent's Day. But the cost of the action is likely to exceed half a million pounds in legal fees, to be paid by the general synod.

Westwood already has a none-too-distinguished financial record: when he sat on the Church of England's assets committee, he presided over the loss of £800 million in dud property investments. Can the church really afford to indulge any more of his expensive whims?

'Lucy Fer'



"I'm not being funny, Gerald, but couldn't we just play Scrabble?"

LUVVIES

Performers don't talk much about stage fright. The spectre of a tongue turned to stone and vomit where the lines should be is all too frightening to be evoked. As Laurence Olivier confided in his last book: "Stage fright is... always waiting outside the door, waiting to get you. You either battle or walk away."

SIR IAN McKELLEN
Letter to Daily Telegraph

Submitted by everyone.

An occasional column devoted to gems from the acting profession. £10 paid for entries.

CHILD ABUSE

THE woman at the heart of the rigorous interrogation of children in the infamous Orkney "satanic abuse" case was also involved in the recent Ayrshire child abuse scandal.

Liz McClean, a worker from the Royal Scottish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (RSSPCC), grilled not only the Orkney children but also the eight Ayrshire children who were recently returned to their homes after five years in care.

Sheriff Colin Miller issued a 433-page judgment on this appalling case. He found, among other things, that:

● People who interviewed the children "pursued one hypothesis to the exclusion of all other possibilities".

● The interviewing was defective and excessive, putting pressure on the children with biased interviews introducing facts as if they had come from the children.

It is of course no coincidence that the Orkney children were removed to the mainland with the help of Strathclyde social services department, who were in charge of the Ayrshire case.

Will the similarities between the cases mean that the Orkney case will also be reviewed? Or will Lord Fraser continue to reassure inquisitive MPs that "proper procedures were adhered to in Orkney" instead of realising that the "W" children have been victims of incompetence at the hands of two deeply discredited social work departments, Orkney and Strathclyde.

Sheriff Miller's Ayrshire judgment also found that:

● There was no evidence of sexual abuse.

● The methods and techniques of some care workers were so defective it made their hearsay evidence worthless.

● The experience, instruction and expertise of care workers and social workers was inadequate.

Lord Hope, Scotland's most senior judge, wrote a report on the case which he concluded was "a tragedy of immense proportions".

The reaction of Strathclyde's social work department has been predictable. Director of social services Mary Hartnoll said social workers acted with the best of motives and complained: "This is the first time in my experience that there has been any decision like this overturned five years later. It is most disappointing that this should happen." That's one word for it.

PS: Liz McClean was also involved in the Rochdale case.

LEGAL NEWS

THE *Sunday Times* continues to insist it will "vigorously defend" itself against Michael Foot's libel action, relying on the testimony of self-confessed liar Oleg Gordievsky to win the day.

The case will hinge on the definition of a "KGB agent". In an interview with *Moscow News* last week, Gordievsky helpfully explained what he meant by the term. "By an agent," he said, "the KGB considered a person who secretly collaborated with intelligence and whose relations with operatives were built on the basis of intelligence discipline. A real agent also received a reward in cash for this." This doesn't quite seem to tally with the line now being taken by John Witherow of the *Sunday Times*.

The paper may face further embarrassment in trying to justify Gordievsky's claim that, when he arrived at the Soviet embassy in London in 1985, he was asked by his KGB masters to reactivate "Agent Boot", who had previously given "much active help". As the *Sunday Times* reported, "the 1985 cable convinced him that Moscow still regarded Foot as an agent".

How odd, then, that as recently as February 1992 Gordievsky poured scorn on the idea that Labour politicians had been working for the KGB. The Soviet Union had "no particularly helpful friends" on the Labour benches, he told the *Independent*. "No one was cooperating with Moscow or helping the Russian embassy in London," he said. "There are no revelations to come." We look forward to hearing how he squares this with his recent "revelations" about Agent Boot.

"SOCIALIST millionaire" Owen Oyston is setting up a "war room" to prepare his defence case for his forthcoming trial on rape charges. He has already assembled a formidable team, including Anthony Scrivener QC, top accountant Michael Connolly and — rather more surprisingly — the red-faced "investigative journalist" Paul Halloran.

Even more surprising is the news that Oyston has asked Michael Murrin, a former private detective and sometime fish-and-chip shop owner, to give evidence for him. Oyston apparently hopes Murrin will testify about a conversation he had three years ago with Melanie Hardy, an ex-model who has been assisting Manchester police with their investigation into Oyston's affairs.

If Murrin does cooperate, it will show him to be a remarkably forgiving man. In recent years he has been on the receiving end of a bombardment of writs and injunctions from Oyston. As recently as June 1993, Oyston even got his solicitor, Peter Carter-Fuck, to threaten Murrin with bankruptcy proceedings. Now, however, Oyston is treating him as a long-lost friend. Sweet, eh?

FASCIST UPDATE

ROTHSCHILD'S, the bank which boasts a proud history of refusing to do business with countries or individuals it regards as anti-semitic, was chief organiser of the recent visit to Britain of Gianfranco Fini, leader of the Italian neo-Fascist party, Alleanza Nationale.

Sir Derek Thomas, a former British ambassador to Italy and now a director of the bank, organised a suitably luxurious lunch for Fini at Rothschild's and, as chairman of the internal meetings committee of the Royal Institute of International Affairs, helped arrange for Mr Fini to address a special meeting at the institute's Chatham House headquarters.

In a letter to the Runnymede Trust, Sir Derek explained that Rothschild's was "a company doing business in Italy" and therefore needed to "know more about emerging political parties" there, such as the neo-Fascists. "Fini has said publicly that he is not a racist or anti-semitic," wrote Sir Derek. The assurance was accepted at face value, despite many similar assurances by Mr Fini's illustrious predecessor, Benito Mussolini.

Nor was there any objection to Rothschild's generous welcome for Fini from either of the two former Tory cabinet ministers who have recently joined the bank's board: N. Lamont and J. Wakeham.

FURTHER EDUCATION

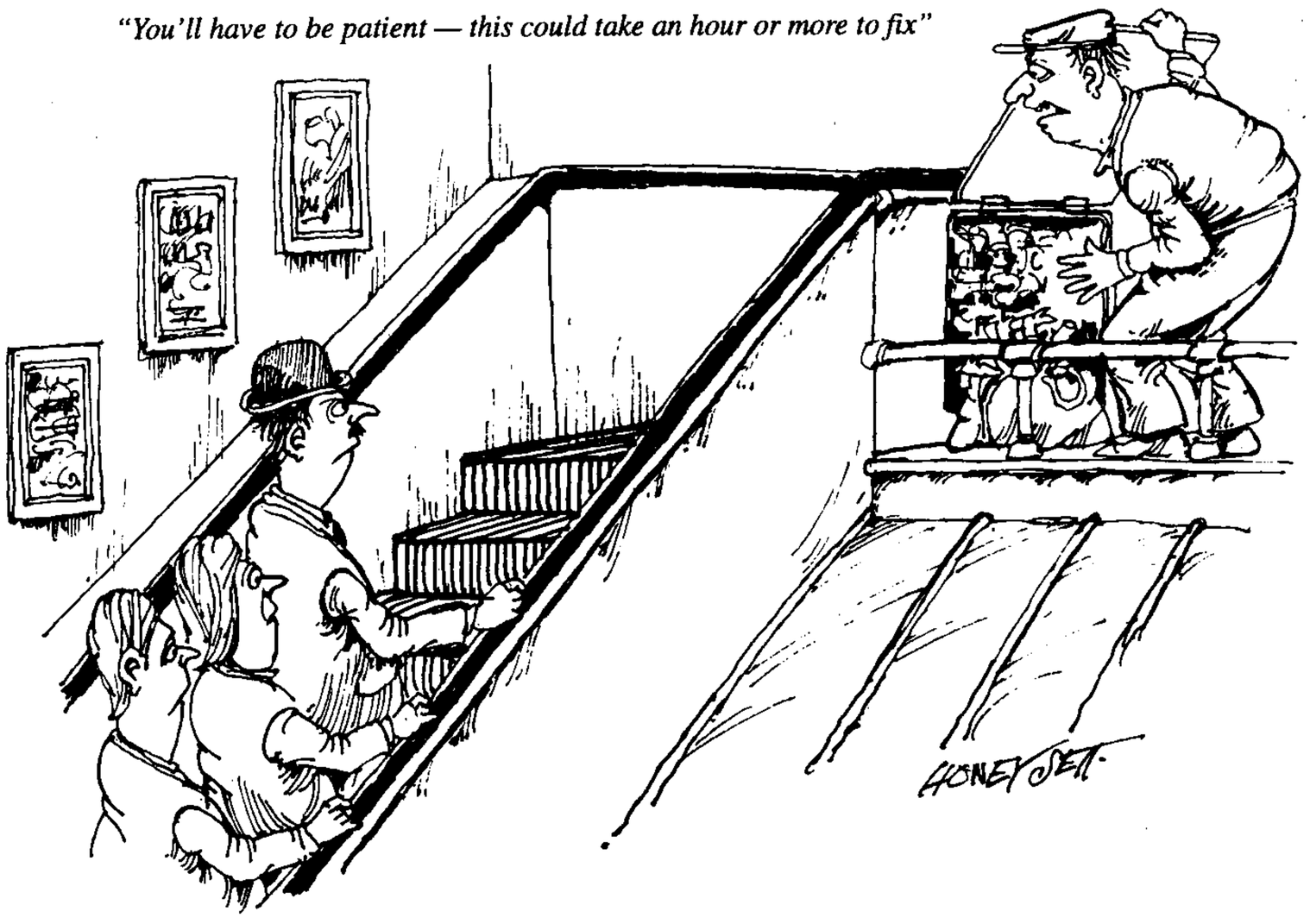
FANCY a holiday in Canada? Then join the management team at Stanmore college in north London.

Their vital trips to Vanier College in Montreal are needed so Stanmore can fully investigate the computer software there for recruiting and enrolling students.

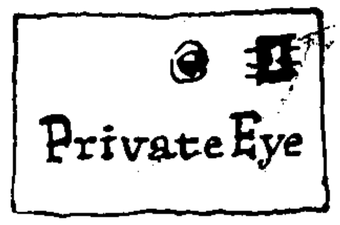
Unfortunately, Stanmore is still waiting for the report on the clever Canadian systems which the managers have so diligently investigated. Still, there will be *another* chance to rectify this oversight when a "small group of staff" visit Vanier College in August.

Why they need to go all the way to Canada is a mystery — the same marvellous software can be viewed at Middlesex College down the road. Clearly staff at Stanmore are just very *dedicated*.

"You'll have to be patient — this could take an hour or more to fix"



Letters



Power gems

Sir,

Your "Fair Shares" Footnote (24 Feb) does not reveal the nature of the change in electricity company shareholding. The reduced number of shareholders do not all have three times as many shares each as they did in 1991. Most remaining individual shareholders have the same, or fewer, shares. The disappeared shareholders have sold shares to corporate shareholders whose holdings have increased enormously.

The effect of this on individual "shareholder power" was illustrated at the recent Northern Electric EGM vote on removal of the 15 percent shareholding limit. The initial vote, on a one shareholder-one vote basis, rejected the proposal by about 4 to 1. This reflected the wishes of the individual shareholders present. The subsequent call for inclusion of proxies, on a one share one vote basis, reversed this decision by 40 to 1.

The Tory picture of involving small shareholders is another of their illusions. The City is still quite firmly in control. Any attempt to control directors' salaries through shareholders would seem to be similarly doomed.

Yours faithfully,
Mr J.M. BROWN,
Ponteland, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

Trust worthy

Sir,

In 1992 the Aberdeen Trust followed a deliberate policy of favouring the lower paid. The senior management team of which I was a member voluntarily accepted a salary freeze in that year whilst the lowest paid saw increases in excess of 4 percent. As an ex-hospital porter, I personally supported this policy of using local pay bargaining to the benefit of the low paid.

The total figure of £79,000 openly reported in the trust's most recent annual report includes such elements as value of pension contributions, the value of my NHS lease car and a one-off bonus payment non-pensionable approved by the Trust Remuneration Committee in recognition of the fact that the trust's targets were met and exceeded. Coincidentally, the trust was awarded a chartermark in that year in recognition of the quality of service provided by its loyal and committed workforce.

With best wishes,

Yours sincerely,
JAMES BARBOUR,
Chief Executive, Aberdeen Royal Hospitals Trust.

Lookalike

Street-Porter

Hancock

Sir,

Seems Janet Street-Porter and Christine Hancock (of the Royal College of Nursing) went to the same gape, glasses and grooming school.

Yours sincerely
A.R. DAVIES,
Walton-on-Thames, Surrey.

Hard pressed

Sir,

*With reference to Privacy Corner (*EYE *866) and the sad news that His Neillness is a touch miffed about the daily grind of being a celeb and having to put up with those god awful press chappies intruding on his privacy. As chairman and sole member of the Andrew Neill Appreciation Society, also known as "Was That Your Career?", I would like to state that I am in complete agreement with his stated views on his personal privacy and I will not hesitate to renew my subscription if this behaviour continues.*

I trust that this letter will **not** *be printed below a picture of the man himself posing with an admirer.*

Yours faithfully,
L. VIGGIANI,
London.

PS: I'm glad to see Mr Neill practises safe sex and wears a cap.

Left out

Sir,

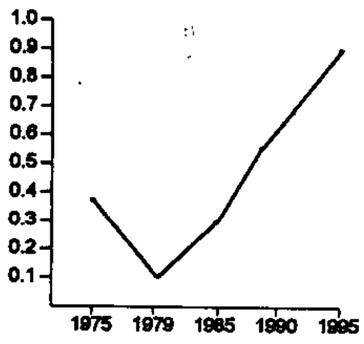
While the thought of being "handpicked" by my lovely MP (Backbiter, EYE *865) fills me with all sorts of naughty glee, I am sorry to tell your slavering readers it didn't happen.*

I am a Labour Party member. LABOUR NEWS, *distributed to all members, invited me to phone my regional office for a ticket for the Tony Blair meeting in Gateshead. I did. I got a ticket. I went. It was a great meeting. The only people I saw excluded were the sellers of* SOCIALIST WORKER *outside the hall, who were a) not members of the party and b) badmouthing the Labour leader's wife. Those admitted included members of the ILP, who put a strong case for the retention of Clause 4.*

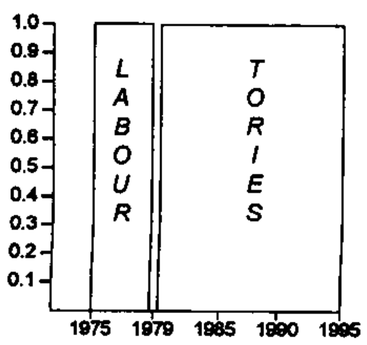
Couldn't your Backbiter get a ticket? Perhaps he/she should join the party. But no: I don't think we want him/her.

Yours fraternally,
GEORGE INMAN,
Chester-le-Street, Co Durham.

Lookalike



Rise in violent crime



Party in power

Sir,

I wonder, did anyone notice the resemblance between the violent crime statistics, as shown in PANORAMA*'s "Screen Killers", and the corresponding party of government.*

Perhaps they are related.

Yours,
NATURAL BORN KILLER.

Sanctioned

Sir,

Your report on the meeting in the House of Commons concerning the UN sanctions still imposed on Iraq both implied too much and said too little. Perhaps your reporter had his or her own agenda which created a block to hearing the whole meeting or appreciating the moral seriousness of most of those concerned.

Nobody present attempted to defend Saddam Hussein or his regime. They were concerned with the injustice and unwisdom of using the suffering of the people of Iraq as a lever to destabilize the regime. The campaign for human rights is not advanced by imposing indiscriminate suffering on the population. The situation reflects the end of World War II when Bishop George Bell of Chichester spoke out against the Allied strategy of saturation bombing of civilian targets and blockading Europe to create discontent against the Nazi regime.

Much vilified at the time, Bell has been vindicated by history but it is hypocritical to weep for Dresden 50 years later while creating a new form of holocaust in Baghdad. Those who repeat Bell's arguments receive the same response today.

The only mention of the arms trade came from Lord Healey who noticed that a convenient spin-off from forbidding a market to Iraqi oil was to boost the economy of Saudi Arabia with which both the UK and the US had recently concluded extremely profitable weapons contracts.

Yours,
RT REV. MICHAEL HARE DUKE
(formerly Bishop of St Andrews),
Perth, Scotland.

"It was a messy divorce"

Flat lies

Sir,

I was amazed to find that our modest little contribution to reducing Oxford's housing shortage by dividing our house into two flats should have made the pages of PRIVATE EYE *(866). Your story was based on several serious errors.*

1. It is untrue that the planning permission we received was in any way unusual. The city council's requirements for off-street parking often cannot be met in this area, and planning committee waives them as they did in our case.

2. It is untrue that we have provided no off-street parking. We have room for one car, which is more than sufficient since neither we nor our tenants have a car. (The planning department were at one time asking us to chop down some trees to provide a second place for a second non-existent car!)

3. It is untrue, as you imply, that I reneged on a promise to let the new flat to a homeless family. There was no such promise. We did in fact offer the flat to an agency which acts for the city council in renting temporary homes for homeless families but the agency refused it. We remain willing to let it to the agency whenever they want it.

4. It is untrue, and libellous to us both, to imply that there has been some sort of collusion between myself and Cllr Rhonda Riachi, our present tenant. She is not a member of the planning committee nor was she at the time our planning consent was given. The letting was handled by a letting agent, who did not even know she was a councillor when he sent her to view the flat.

It is of course ironic that a Labour councillor is living in a flat which the Labour city council would not use as temporary accommodation for a homeless family. But that is for the local Labour party to work out.

There is no scandal to be found in this story though malicious political opponents have done their best to make it seem so. You have, I fear, been used.

Yours truly,
MARGARET GODDEN,
Oxford.

"Yes we're looking for two dangerous criminals — 'Society's Fault' Johnson and 'Unhappy Childhood' Maguire"

Well connected

Sir,

Piloti (866) comments that Kent commuters don't want to be in St Pancras, they want to be in the City. When the EYE *on a previous occasion called the decision to take the Channel tunnel rail link north of the Thames barmy, I commented that long-distance travellers don't want to be in Waterloo, they want to be where the connections are. Was your non-publication of my letter by any chance unrelated?*

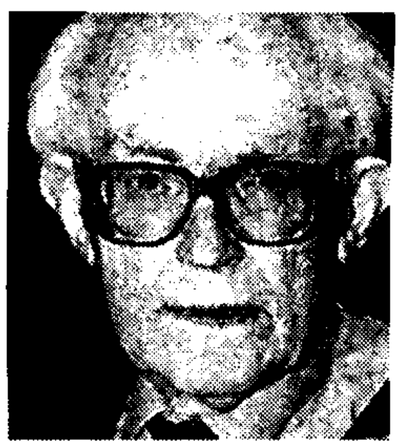
Piloti suggests a sell-out to SNCF. Personally I consider SNCF (taken as a whole, that is, and not just the TGV) to be the world's worst railway — but then I have actually travelled most of it recently. I was there when striking forestry workers picketing the railway (well, you can't picket a forest) handed out to passengers a leaflet in which they themselves gave SNCF a slagging for being interested only in money-making TGVs and letting the rest of the system rot. I thought you should be told.

Plus ça change.

Yours faithfully,
MICHAEL OAKLEY,
Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands.

Lookalike

Foot



Allen

Sir,

I wonder if any of your readers have noticed the remarkable resemblance between the well-known politician Michael Foot and the famous American comedian Woody Allen?

Are they by any chance related?

Yours in haste,
ENA. B.

I-SPY

Submitted by Dr Nancy Blakestad. £10 paid for similar submissions. *(SAE required for return of photographs. No transparencies.)*

Slated

Sir,

Could the Jim Slater, author of INVESTMENT MADE EASY *advertised by a book club on the back of your latest issue (866), be any relation to "Changi" Jim Slater, so often mocked in your Slicker column?*

I think we should be told.

Yours etc,
NICK WRAY,

Derby.

Sub-standard editor

Sir,

Dear oh dear. Fancy building a whole review of my book on Tony Blair on the rush there must have been to finish it, and in the critical sentence you yourselves leave out a preposition, rendering it meaningless: "Poor Mr Sopel clearly had to write this in a tremendous hurry, and shows". I think an "it" might have helped. Also — and I know this is a trivial point — the name is Jon Sopel, not Tony Sopel as you say. An easy mistake I appreciate, but there is a clue on the jacket of the book where my name is printed quite clearly. And Kaufman was the father of the "longest suicide note in history" quip.

Perhaps your reviewer ought to consider another day job, or at least tell the despatch rider to turn the engine off while he checks his copy.

Yours,
JON SOPEL,

Alresford, Hants.

Brown bread and butter

Sir,

I saw in your organ some bollocks satire on "Legalaide". Life is a shit sandwich: if we get a bit of bread you the punter eat less shit. Remember that next time you get banged up, ripped off or run over.

Yours,
JRD,

The cardboard box, Preston.

Nether regions

Sir,

The suggestion (EYE *866) that the* GUARDIAN *is dumping its regional theatre reviews is so way out that it's north of Watford as we say here. All our critics are required to foray further than the West End. Michael Billington, our chief theatre critic, our music critics and visual arts critics are all covering more out of London events than ever before. Reviews by our regional critics (theatre or anything else) compete for available space on an equal footing. In addition, we carry two pages exclusively devoted to the theatre every Wednesday. We know we could do more and probably will. If that's dumping, then we'll carry on dumping.*

Yours etc,
IAN MAYES,

Arts Editor, the GUARDIAN.

Old boys' Internet

Sir,

I am bewildered by your assertion that my front-page GRAUNIAD *story about the Internet "omitted one interesting fact" — that I am an Internet consultant as well as a journalist.*

I'm sorry, but I fail to see what is interesting about this supposed omission.

Your story omits a far more interesting fact: I am currently engaged, with your full knowledge, in preparing your own organ's presence on the Internet.

With clients like you, who needs enemies?

NICK ROSEN,
Intervid, London WC2.

Please address letters for publication to Private Eye, 6 Carlisle Street, London W1V 5RG or e-mail to strobes@cix.compulink.co.uk (marked "For Publication"). And the Eye's WWW page is now available at http://www.intervid.co.uk/intervid/eye/gateway.html

Colemanballs

£10 paid for contributions

"The young aren't interested in mime nowadays. It has nothing to say to them."
Radio 4
(M.J. Blackmore)

"Sampras's heart must have been in his hands..."
COMMENTATOR, SKY
(Dr Terence G. Skinner)

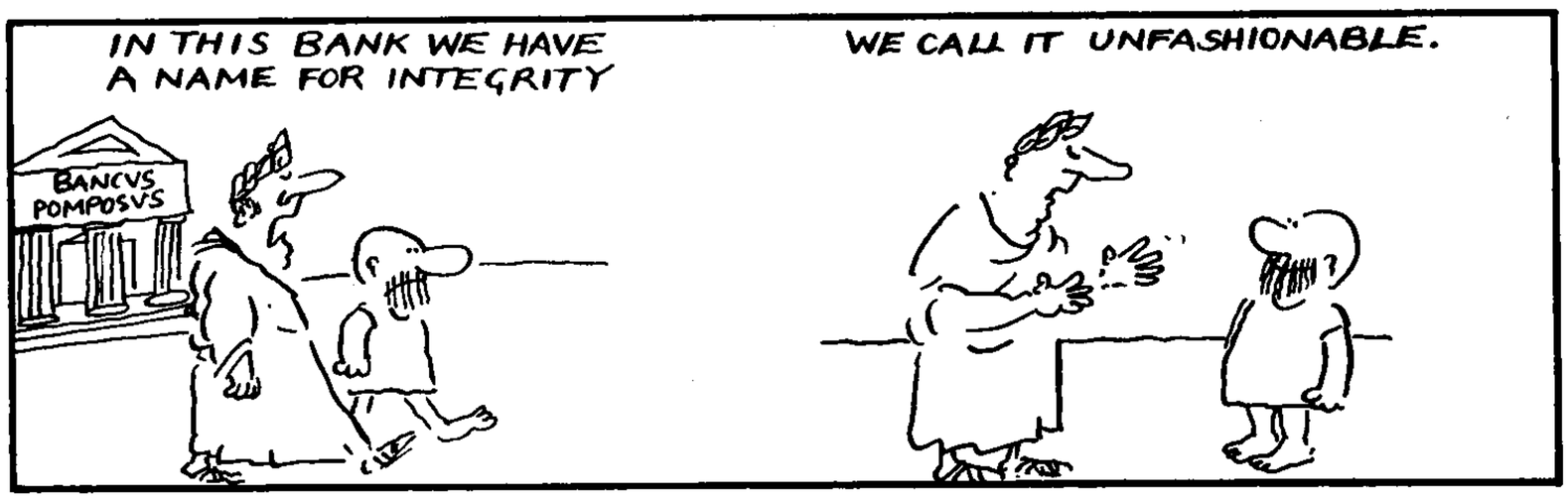
"Castleford are looking down the barrel of a far different match."
MAURICE BAMFORD, Radio Leeds
(M. Slyman)

"This is the worst day for Newcastle since Custer's last stand against the Sioux."
ALAN MULLERY, Capital Gold
(R. Cooper)

Les Dennis: *Name a song with "Moon" in the title.*
Contestant: *Blue Suede Shoes...*
ITV
(Richard Jolley)

HOM-SAP

BY DAVID AUSTIN



Letter from Gaza

from Our Own Correspondent

***EID*, the festival marking the end of the month-long fast of Ramadan, was the first *Eid* since before Ottoman times that was free of the presence of colonisers' soldiers. While there was much whirling of the Palestinian dervishes here in Gaza, it is an uneasy peace and everyone knows it.**

For a start the soldiers have not "withdrawn" as promised in the much trumpeted Oslo agreement but merely "redeployed": out of sight, but not out of mind. They remain to protect the tiny population of 2,000 whose settlements occupy 20 percent of the land of Gaza while one million of us fester in the remaining 80 percent, making ours the most densely populated strip of land in the world. Oh, and their 20 percent consumes 40 percent of the water. No wonder the desert blooms.

Then of course comes the small point that we are now starving here. Only 15,000 of the 250,000 available labourers are allowed to cross the single check point into Israel to sell themselves as day-wage workers. The rest of us are locked up waiting on the World Bank and the international donors who basked on the White House lawn braying their promises of largesse into the CNN microphones but who have delivered next to nothing.

The only payments arriving are the salaries of our new police and "national security". They are required to keep the rest of the masses from revolting. Good King Fahd gave our president £7 million last month when he visited Mecca — but only to pay the police wage bill which was two months in arrears.

And there are the elections: pledged in the Oslo agreement for last July and still nowhere in sight. And the withdrawal from the cities of the West Bank also now almost one year late. And the settlements.

When the lunatic "lone nut" Doctor Goldstein opened fire in the Mosque of Ibrahim in Hebron during Ramadan last year killing more than 50 Muslims at prayer, Israel's Yitzhak Rabin had the chance of a lifetime to act against the zealots. He failed to do so: settlement activity has increased by 20 percent since the peace deal was signed, and the settlers, mostly Brooklyn born like Goldstein, openly worship Goldstein's memory.

So it should not surprise you that Mr Arafat is steadily losing ground, or that there are lunatic zealots on this side prepared to fasten explosives around their middle and catch an Israeli omnibus "straight to heaven".

Towards the end of the month of fasting Arafat, now 66, looked weary and unfamiliar with unpopularity. His young wife Suha has left him for the more comfortable salons of Paris to prepare for her confinement in September, and it is impossible not to feel sorry for Arafat. In fact, most still look upon him with affection. But it seems he is one of those historical figures doomed to have lived too long.

The real tragedy, however, is Israel's, because after President Arafat comes the deluge. The latest US polling in the occupied territories gave him 45 percent; Hamas and other Islamists 25 percent, the Marxists 10 percent with the rest spread among "independents" — like gorgeous pouting Hanan Ashrawi, who is now in open opposition to Arafat and as a Christian with strong links to America a hate figure on the Islamic right. Without Arafat, however, data shows his moderate faction Fatah losing more than half its support — virtually all of it to the Hamas and Islamic Jihad. And among the young, the sans culottes, the propensity to see the future in apocalyptic terms is almost absolute.

Both the Muslim *Sunna* and the Jewish *Torah* prophesy that Armageddon will be fought between them on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem and that the combatants will wade up to their knees in each other's blood. Our teaching says that the "other life" will commence after that battle.

With not much to live for in this one, an alarming number of people speak of little else than that other life. Still, things might improve: we are welcoming someone very important called John Major to Gaza on 14 March.

FUNNY OLD WORLD

"Yes, it's true that some people have called me a bimbo, slut and whore," Annabel Chong told Los Angeles reporters as she embarked on her latest world record attempt. "Jerry Falwell even said that I should 'be buried in a Y-shaped coffin', but they're all completely wrong. It's just that I enjoy my body, and so do my men."

Ms Chong, 22, a Singapore-born sociology student and pornographic actress, was attempting to set a new sex record by having intercourse with 300 men in ten hours. "My advertisement for volunteers drew 12,700 replies from all over the world, especially Sweden and Germany. The chosen 300 have all been told to bring an AIDS certificate and a condom with them when they report to reception. I've planned the event like a Roman orgy, with me dressed as an Egyptian princess and the men in togas. Each man has only been allotted 90 seconds to perform, so I've arranged for five women to stand by, to act as warm-ups and to avoid bottlenecks.

"I'll be taking a break every two hours to fix my make-up. I've never made love to more than twelve men simultaneously before, but I'm not afraid of hard work so I'm confident of success. Even if a few volunteers fail to rise to the occasion, I shall still smash the existing record. I asked a Mr McWhirter at the Guinness Book of Records to officiate, and to join in if he so wished, but he has not returned my call." *(Sunday Morning Post [Hong Kong], 22/1/95. Spotter — Anon)*

—o—

"At the time, it seemed like a miracle," Brenda Murphy told the vicar of St John with St Michael, Bournemouth. "Two weeks ago, I was having a picnic on the lawn and my little daughter said she wanted a cat. I told her to ask Jesus for one, so she started to pray. Barely ten seconds later, this pussy suddenly came hurtling through the air, screeching very loudly, and landed inside our wicker hamper. It's stayed with us ever since. What was I to think?"

While reclaiming his cat, the vicar was able to offer a more prosaic explanation of events to astonished parishioners. "Two weeks ago, Horace became stuck in a tree. I couldn't get him down, so I climbed up as far as I could, tied one end of a rope around the trunk, and the other to my car bumper. Then I drove slowly forward, bending the bough nearer to the ground. Unfortunately my foot slipped on the accelerator, the car shot forward, the rope broke, and Horace was catapulted into space and clean out of sight. There was no sign of him at all. If I hadn't seen Brenda buying cat food in Tesco's, when I knew she didn't have a cat, Horace's whereabouts would still be a puzzle. The Lord moves in mysterious ways indeed. Praise Him." *(Bournemouth Advertiser, 1/2/95. Spotter — R. Gill)*

Compiled by

Victor Lewis-Smith

—o—

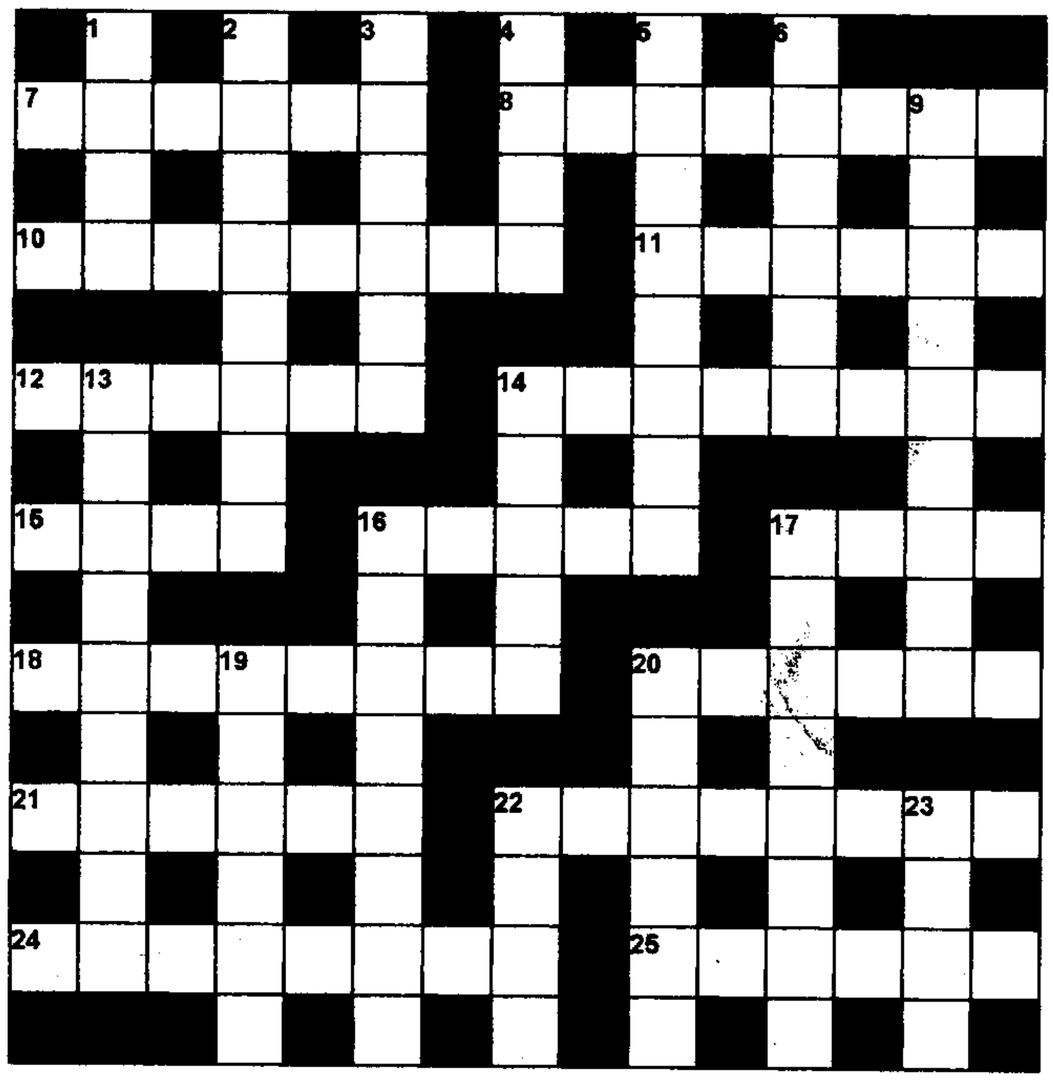
"I cannot remember how it got there," bricklayer Arcadio Javier told hospital authorities in Higuey, Dominican Republic, after a surgeon had removed a hundred-watt light bulb from his colon. "It is like a dream. I recall going to see a hypnotist at my local theatre. I remember that I was given a lemon to suck, and he told me that I was a Roman god. Then I was informed that I was Thomas Edison, and was asked to demonstrate whether I was AC or DC. After that, everything became misty, but perhaps that is how the bulb got there."

Mrs Javier has filed for divorce. "It's no mystery to me," she told reporters. "He's a liar. He's been to no hypnotist. Arcadio regularly goes on 15-day drinking sprees with a transvestite who calls himself Maria. I've had enough. They get up to all sorts. I've found no end of things up in the attic."

After reconnection, the light bulb was found still to be working. (Rochester Courier [US]. 26/1/95. Spotter — E.D.P.M. Kingston)

EYE CROSSWORD 23 by Cyclops

£100 Winner ROGER BARNARD



ACROSS

7 Someone looking for sexual gratification (6)

8 Group of non-european countries, each having Santer de-controlled border (4,4)

10/17ac On the outside an arse, but not one for easy gain (8,4)

11/23 Boozer's ostentatious opening with organ, then there's a rush (6,4)

12 Johnny has a brief second with Ted (6)

14 Legitimate target, but not if Grobbelaar's in goal? (4,4)

15 Repetition: something not warmly embraced by Teddy Taylor and minority of House (4)

16 Silly thing to go on (5)

17 (see 10)

18 It was perversely seen in reggae style music as one sign of fascism (8)

20 Smack — time to get in senior ex-president (6)

21 Still daft as Conservative tit (6)

22 Major battles in Ronnie's defence (4,4)

24 Daily aims thwarted, Major has little going for him (8)

25 It hits ships transporting english ox, etc (6)

DOWN

1 Try getting a positive response from Fergie, as a painter (4)

2 Noel garb naff according to subiect of notorious *Gotcha* (8)

3 Swearing, some coyly say, like Cantona (6)

4 Diana looks somewhat like a bum (4)

5 The PM has a thing, yes? Well, he doesn't strictly have one at present! (8)

6 Sounds like spying capital, as some still have it (6)

9 Deposit holding institution that likes to say 'Yes! Yes! Oh God! Yes!'? (5,4)

13 Rough cut look is one of our features (9)

14 Some disbelief at warrant, possibly a death one (5)

16 Margaret? — popular cow initially, besieged by journalists (8)

17 Get lost, stupid, join Open University (5,3)

19 South Africa: flag is a parody (6)

20 Losing credit, Archer's dodgy second investments (6)

22 Lay one type of carpet (4)

23 (see 11)

£100 prize to first correct solution opened on 17.03.95. Entries to "Crossword", Private Eye, 6 Carlisle Street, London W1V 5RG.

Solution to Crossword No. 22

ACROSS: 8 Kuwait 9 Adultery 10/5 Criminal Justice Act 11 Thrash 12 Peer 13 Franc 14 Suez 15 Carlton 17 Fascist 20 Show 22 Tract 23 Ayes 25 Prince 26 The Crown 28 Bollocks 29 Granny.

DOWN: 1 (See 24) 2 Balmoral 3 Eton 4 Maclean 5 (See 10) 6 Uterus 7 Brussels 13 Front Bench 16 Atherton 18 Chairman 19 Fantasy 21 Wangle 24/1 Edwina Currie 27 Eggs.

MY BUNG FURY

by Ron Knee

by **E.I. Erewego**, Our Man In The Little Chef With The Empty Envelope And The Hopeful Look

THE SOCCER world was rocked to its foundations last night when Neasden's ashen-faced manager Ron Knee complained that no one had offered him any money all season.

Said the tight-lipped mastermind of the eleven-man-defence system: "I was waiting in the cab for the man with the bung but nothing happened. Imagine my shock when all I got was a player called Adolf Klingfilm from the Cypriot League leaders Spartak Spudulik."

Bung Ho

Knee continued: "I had received a fax from their club chairman, a Mr Boutros Boutros Makarios, saying he would give me £50 to take this player off his hands. I am still waiting for the money.

"I am taking this case to FIFA and, if necessary, to the European Court of Human Rights. Why should I, Big Ron Knee, the man they call Soccer's Mr Football, be the only man in the League not to get a backhander? I am sick as a parrot, quite literally, after this Little Chef Special Grill." (ON OTHER PAGES: That Knee Grill in full.)

LATE SCORE

Virgin Gatwick Express Charity Shield

AFC Neasden	0
Barings Bank XI	3

(Boring, P. 2, Pevsner [o.g.] 1)

'NO ONE TO BLAME'

says Bank of England enquiry

by Our Barings Staff **Lunchtime O'Nol'mbroke**

MR Edward "Eddie" George, the Governor of the Bank of England, yesterday published a full and frank enquiry into the conduct of the Bank of England during the collapse of the Barings merchant bank.

The one-page document exonerates Mr George of any responsibility at all for anything that happened at any time.

The report concludes with a ten-point resumé of Mr George's key findings about himself.

1. The Bank of England was not aware of anything at any stage, which is its job as regulator.

2. Even if it *had* been aware of anything, it could not have acted in any way to prevent the collapse of a major bank because that is not its function as a financial watchdog.

3. Mr George was anyway on holiday at the time, skiing in the Austrian ski resort of Schloss Apacket.

7. Mr George had it on the personal authority of his very old friend Mr Peter Baring that it was all the fault of "some oik".

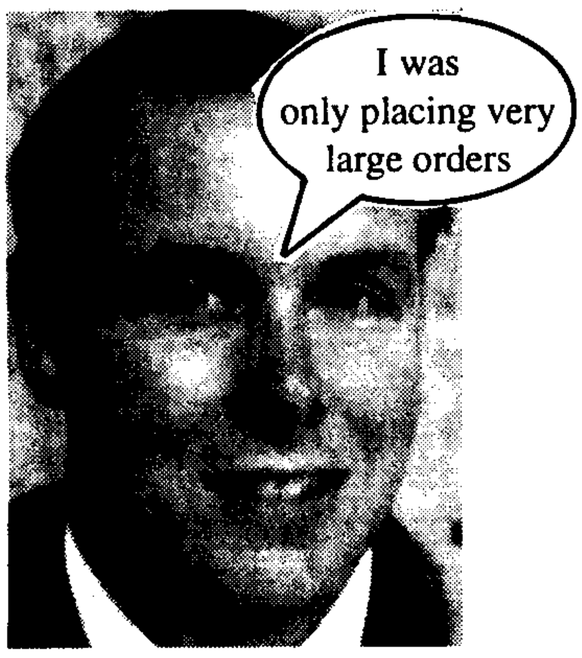
29. Since nothing untoward has happened, it will obviously never happen again.

37. Your money is safe with us.

574. Er...

1028. That's it.

LEESON INNOCENT



NEWS ROUND UP

- "I'm not gay," says top actor. "My heterosexual shame" . . . 4
- **Di and Hoare. "They are an item," says Mellor 9**
- "I think Robert Altman's film is brilliant," says Madman 22
- **"I was a teenage verger," says top Dean's wife . . . 26**
- Tony Blur wins Twit Awards *(shurely shome mishtake?)* . . . 38
- **Plus in the FUNDAY EYE, new kids'classic: "Winnie The Murderer" by A.N.C. Milne.** *(Shurely sheveral mishtakes? Ed.)*

TRADING BEGINS IN LEESON FUTURES

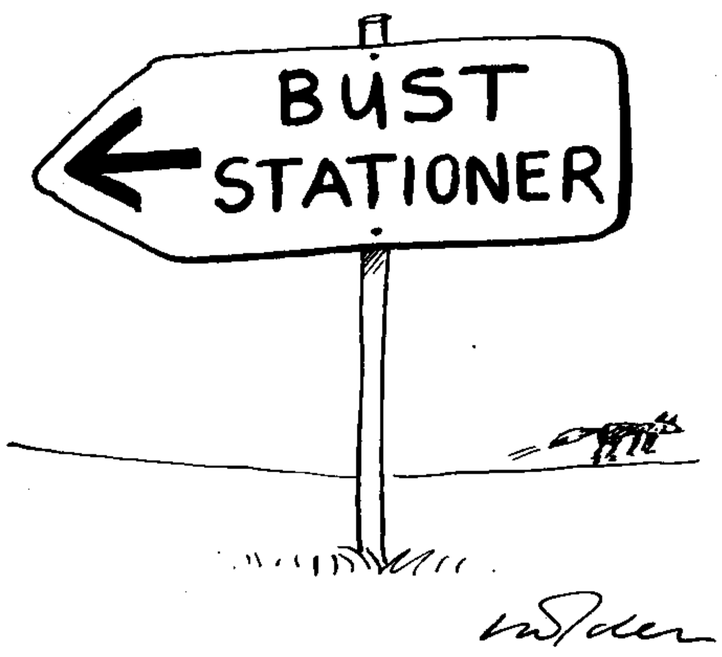
The Secret DIARY OF JOHN MAJOR aged 47¾

Monday

Oh dear. This morning we heard the terrible news that one of this country's finest and most respected institutions has collapsed overnight. It is Ryman's the stationers, renowned throughout the world for its high-quality stationery, rubber bands, staplers and ring-binders. Not to mention, of course, little books which are very useful for writing in the names of certain persons, e.g. Bastards, Barmies and the new woman whose name I never mention, i.e Mrs Gorman. I hear that even her Majesty buys her stationery at Ryman's. When I heard the news I thought it was inconceivable that we should let such a not inconsiderable part of our heritage go bankrupt. Oh no. So I immediately looked up the number of the Bank of England in the phone book. Having been in banking myself, I knew the ropes and I asked to speak to the manager. "I'm sorry," said a rather rude young woman, "he's in a very important meeting with the Chancellor of the Exchequer discussing the crisis." "Oh good," I said. "That means they are already at work on this terrible news about Ryman's. Don't interrupt them. Just say that John Major called." "And where shall I say you're from?" she asked. "Brixton," I replied. "Not that it's anything to do with you." But for once I put the phone down feeling that the country was in good hands.

Tuesday

Today I was in my very top form at Question Time. For weeks Mr Blair has been me the same question. "Does the Prime Minister not deplore the obscene pay rises which are given to bosses of recently nationalised public utilities?" Usually I say "Oh no, it is entirely a matter for them how much they pay themselves." But today I really made him look a complete dimwit, which is what he is, i.e. a dimwit. He jumped up with his silly smile and asked his question. Imagine his surprise when I said "Oh yes. I do deplore the rises. In my judgement they are most distasteful." He was so amazed by my new get-tough policy on pay rises, that all he could do was stand there and ask me what I was going to do about it. Unfortunately I had not thought of that bit, but Mr Hunt passed me a piece of paper with a brilliant reply. "Tell him there's a committee looking into it, and it would be quite improper to pre-empt its findings." There were huge cheers from our side when I read this out, and shouts of "dimwit, dimwit!" even from the Labour side, which shows what a great triumph I had won.



Wednesday

Today is another ordinary historic day when I have to unite the party on Europe with one of my inspiring, agenda-setting speeches. Mr Hurd tells me that what everyone is waiting for is a firm line on (a) the Referendum and (b) the Single Currency. So that is what they will get. On both issues I am now firmly persuaded that it might be a good idea to have one. But I am equally firmly persuaded that it might not be a good idea. And you can't get much firmer than that! So much for those who say that I am not firm. This is my new policy and I expect everyone in the party to get firmly behind me.

Thursday

My speech was another triumph. My new firm policy resulted in a huge victory of 5 votes in the big European debate. Only one Conservative voted against me, i.e my very ex-friend Norma Lamont. He told the TV cameras outside the Houses of Parliament that he was only against me because I had not made my position clear. What nonsense. I had made it perfectly clear that I was both for and against. You can't get much clearer than that! Obviously he must have been to visit his friend Mr Onanugu at Thresher's before the debate. All I can say is that it is a great shame Ryman's has collapsed, otherwise I would have gone out to buy a special new book to be called "The Biggest Bastard Of Them All Book", which would have just one name in it, written on every page in different coloured biros, depending on my mood and availability from Ryman's.

Friday

At 6 o'clock this morning I was considerably woken up by my brother Terry, who was ringing from Gatwick to say he was just off to Ireland for his holiday. What he wanted to know was if he could get me another Aran Island pullover, like the one I left behind once at Mrs Kieran's, when I had to come to rescue Cyril the Squirrel, who wouldn't come out from behind the sink. I was in no small measure very angry with him for going off to Ireland without asking me. "Don't you realise," I said, "that, thanks to my historic Framework Document, there is now peace in Ireland. Therefore it would be very dangerous for you to go there. You are a top-security risk, due to your high-profile position." Terry thought for a moment and said: "John, just for once, you are right. As a famous author and celebrity I might easily be a target. I will go to Birmingham instead. The NEC is holding a very interesting exhibition about caravans called 'International Mobile Home '95' "

Saturday

Poor Mr Clarke has put his foot in it. This is very unfortunate. It would be in no small measure unfair to dwell on the details of his gaffe but for the record Mr Clarke said there was a thriving steelworks at a place called Consett. And there isn't. We closed it down ages ago, which he should have known. I feel very sorry for him. Mr Clarke can never be Prime Minister now. No one who makes those sort of mistakes will ever be forgiven by the public. I said this to Terry, who rang from a Chevrolet Supertraveller at the NEC. "You're right," he said. "You and Norman should move into one of these and go camping."

Of course, if you are someone like Terry, such mistakes do not matter so much, e.g. the name of my cricket bat was not an Arnold Sutton but a J.B. Croydon (see page 378 of his so-called book). On second thoughts, maybe Terry should be Chancellor of the Exchequer!

Sunday

My wife Norman tells me that we are getting rid of the Constable in No. 10. "But I like him," I said. "He is very friendly and helps Mr Hanley with the crossword when I am too busy."

"No," she said. "Constable is a painter."

"But we've just had the place redecorated," I said. It is typical of women that they always want to change everything.

Poetry Corner

In Memoriam:
Bernard Cornfeld

So. Farewell
Then Bernie
Cornfeld.

Millionaire and
Confidence
Trickster.

"Do you
Sincerely want
To be rich?"

Yes.
That was your
Catchphrase.

And you
Were.

E.J. Thribb (17½)

Lucy Tuck

To begin with, I found Jonathan Coe's **What a Carve Up!** (Viking £10.99) too embarrassingly obvious: the flat blokeish prose, groaning under its freight of passé po-mo self-co; the easy-PC targets (arms trade, agribusiness, journalism). But I was wrong. Ghastlier than *Mary Shelley's Frankenstein*, longer than *The Fermata*, and a *$@!*£ sight more @&*%!*$! than *How Late It Was, How Late*, this novel has tremendous biro.

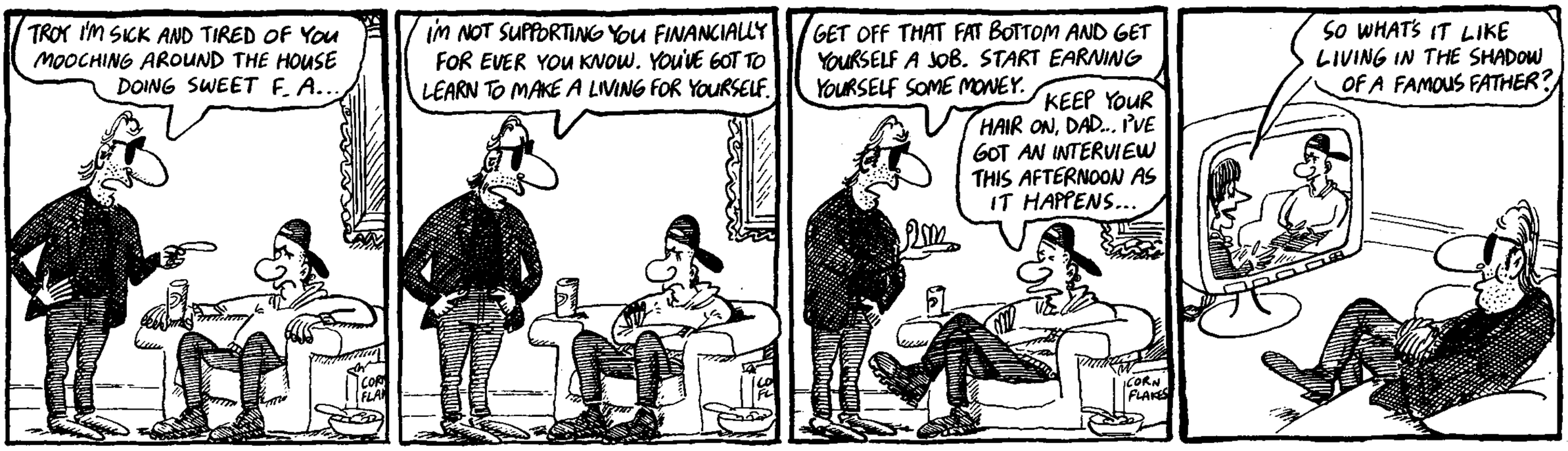
Observer

Retired garage proprietor Joseph Cowlam who was shot five times by police marksmen during a siege at his home died from natural causes.

Huddersfield Telegraph & Argus

Great Bores Of Today.

"... it's just barbaric that it should go on in the twentieth century when you think that we've abolished bear-hunting cock-baiting and other barbaric practices you know like dissecting frogs in school and public hangings and so on yet they allow people like Prince Charles to gallop over the countryside chasing poor harmless animals like foxes which are no different from cats genetically and which anyway keep the whole ecology balanced by killing chickens and lambs which would otherwise be exported to the Continent in crates er... I saw this photo in the *Guardian* of this dog they didn't want because it couldn't catch anything and they starved it to death no really it's what they do to all the dogs so when they let them out on the hunt they'll kill anything badgers squirrels stags hedgehogs babies toddlers it is barbaric personally I'd like to garotte the sort of people who can be that cruel to living things do you like my new leather jacket? it's brilliant £700 in Camden Market..."


TROY I'M SICK AND TIRED OF YOU MOOCHING AROUND THE HOUSE DOING SWEET F_ A...
I'M NOT SUPPORTING YOU FINANCIALLY FOR EVER YOU KNOW. YOU'VE GOT TO LEARN TO MAKE A LIVING FOR YOURSELF.
GET OFF THAT FAT BOTTOM AND GET YOURSELF A JOB. START EARNING YOURSELF SOME MONEY.
KEEP YOUR HAIR ON, DAD... I'VE GOT AN INTERVIEW THIS AFTERNOON AS IT HAPPENS...
SO WHAT'S IT LIKE LIVING IN THE SHADOW OF A FAMOUS FATHER?
CORN FLAKES

Those Borings in full

What are they like, the colourful dynasty who have run Britain's oldest banking empire for thousands of years?

Sir Peter Boring, 57. Tight-lipped supremo of Boring Bros, the family bank. When asked yesterday what he thought about losing all the family's money and presiding over the downfall of the Queen's bank, he said: "Good evening."

Lady Sexilia Boring, 21. Supermodel 7th cousin of Sir Cedric Boring, the last governor of Tanganyika. Once appeared in the Peterborough column when she was mistaken for her cousin, Lady Drusilla Boring *(see below)*.

Lord Basingstoke, 65. Reclusive former head of Boring Charitable Trust, when, as the Hon. Archie Boring, he awarded an annual grant of £500 to the New Dworkin ContraceptiveDanceTroupe.

Lady Rose Kennedy Boring, 109. Formerly the Keeper of the Queen's Hot Water Bottle. Matriarch of the clan, she remains hugely powerful, although dead.

Hon. Paddington Baring, 20. Sacked from Eton for arriving at a London railway terminus without a ticket.

Nick Fivers, 25. Council-house born cause of the downfall of all the above. When asked why he had hired Mr Fivers to run his Far East derivatives operation, Sir Peter Boring said: "Good evening."

EXPERT ANALYSIS

Our City Editor answers your questions

Q. What exactly is a derivative?

A. A derivative is a very complex financial instrument. Put simply, it is the dealer's way of er... um... it's a sort of gambling, yes, that's it, gambling, whereby the trader bets, as it were, on er... er... look at it another way. You know the Nikkei Index? The one that is a bit like the Hang Seng and the Footsie? Well, that goes up and down and er... er... I'll start again. You know that bit in *Wall Street* where the guy in the braces shouts "I'm long on pork bellies"? No, sorry, that was *Trading Places*... er... er... as I said it's basically stocks and shares, buying and selling, gilts futures, up three points, down three points, that sort of thing, OK? Er... er... suffice to say that getting involved with Derivatives is very risky indeed. You get in deeper than you think, you don't know what you're doing, you try and cover it up and you end up thoroughly discredited, probably losing your job and having to run away.

Q. Where are you going with that suitcase?

A. Bye!

© All newspapers

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sir,

Things have come to a pretty pass when a 14-year-old boy from a council house can run away to Kuala Lumpur and precipitate the downfall of one of this country's greatest institutions — viz. Barings Bank. What hope is there for the rest of us when one cannot even put one's life savings in Her Majesty's bank without fearing that it will be lost overnight just because some small boy has had a tiff with his parents over a plate of spilled spaghetti?

I remain, sir, yours confused,

SIR PETER JAYBOTHAM
The BBC

Dear Sir,

Lord Rees-Mogg is surely right when he blames the Bank of England for the collapse of Mr Stephen Fry. The regulatory bodies have lamentably failed to spot the warning signs which were there for all the world to see, that one of our best-loved institutions was in danger of breakdown. No wonder the 14-year-old boy genius has had to flee to Kuala Lumpur to escape the attentions of the police of five continents who are even now looking for Mr Fry and his wife in the jungles of Bruges *(shurely 'Borneo'? Ed.)*

Yours faithfully,

VICTOR MELDREWSKI
The Lubianka, Moscow

Dear Sir,

I was deeply shocked by the allegations that Mr Stephen Fry was a fully-paid-up agent of the KGB. All of us in the KGB have known for years that the man they should be looking for is Mr Nick Leeson, who has brought down the entire capitalist system single-handedly as part of our long-term strategy for the Communist takeover of Russia.

Yours fraternally,

MICHAEL FOOT
Hampstead Heath
London NW3

Dear Sir,

As one who has known Stephen Fry intimately for many years, I can attest that he is a convinced Socialist who would never betray his country for an uncertain future in the 'derivatives' market. Should Mr Fry choose to marry an actress from *Baywatch*, that is entirely his own affair.

I remain, sir, wherever I may happen to be at this moment,

LORD LUCAN
c/o The Royal Bank of Botswana
Maputo

Dear Sir,

There is only one lesson to be learned from the unhappy saga of Baring Bros. This is what happens when you let lower-class riff-raff into one of our most respected and venerable institutions, as we ourselves found when we let that dreadful Fergie gel into the royal firm.

We remain, sir,

THE QUEEN
Windsor Oil Co.
Dallas, Berks.

Dear Sir,

I fail to see what the panic is all about. Just because one of our oldest established banks goes belly-up overnight, there is no reason for undue concern. I assure you that this sort of thing could happen to any bank at any time, including my own.

Yours faithfully,

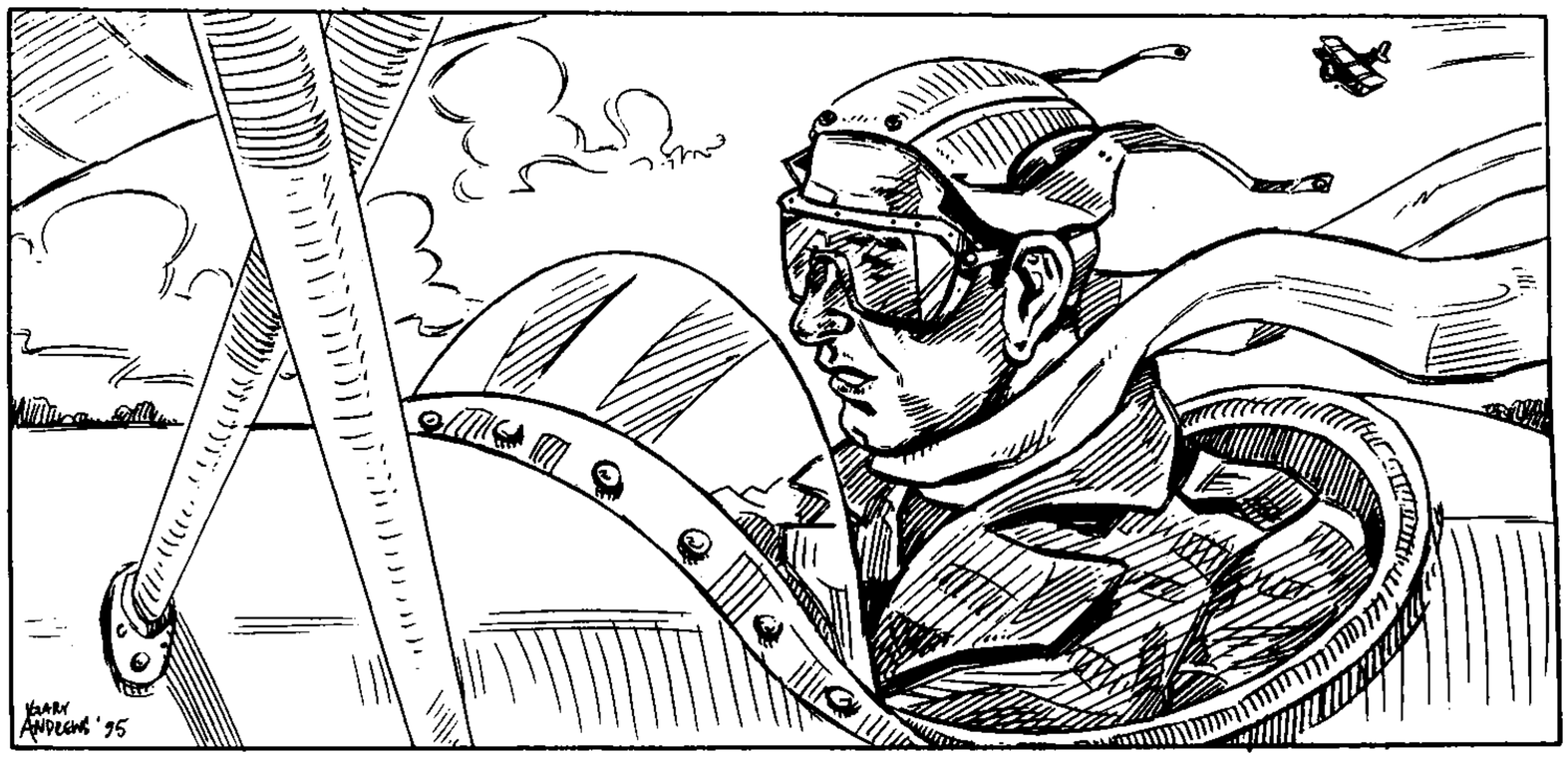
EDDIE GEORGE
(aged 14)
Somewhere in Kuala Lumpur.

(That's enough letters. Ed.)

LAUGHTER WITH THE L.A. GANGSTAS

BIGGEARS FLIES AGAIN

by CAPT. W.E. JOHNS



"THAT looks a lark," said Group Captain 'Biggears' Windsor, more formally known as His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales. "Can I have a bash at landing the old crate?"

His co-pilot, Squadron Leader "Ginger" Gingerson, looked worried.

"Are you sure you know what you're doing, Sir?"

"Of course I do. I'm the heir to the throne. Now give me the bally joystick."

"Very well, Your Majesty."

The plane took a sickening dive and screamed towards the runway. There was a sound of rending metal, squealing rubber and screaming sheep as the BAE-146 Feeder Jet flopped onto the tarmac.

"Cripes! Biggears! You've pranged the kite!" shouted a shaken Ginger as the £30 million aircraft ploughed into the thick peat bog of Islay.

"Don't worry. Everything's under control," announced Biggears cheerfully.

"What do you mean 'under control'?" stammered Ginger as the stricken turbo-jet sank slowly into the Scottish mud.

"Well, there will be an official enquiry, *you* will take all the blame, and then you will get early retirement."

"And you, Sir?"

"I'll get off scot-free, keep my jolly old wings and carry on terrorising the airways."

"Hoorah, Sire!" cried the disgraced ex-Squadron Leader. "Biggears flies again!"

© *Boy's Own.*

JEEVES AND WOOSTER

(Silly music. Wooster sits at piano playing 'Tears of a Clown' by Mister Smokewell 'Smokey' Robinson. Enter Jeeves with cocktail)

Wooster: What ho, Jeeves!

Jeeves: Indeed sir.

Wooster: Now what jolly old snortington have you come up with this time?

Jeeves: It is something rather new, sir, which I have taken the liberty of naming the Fleet Street Hack Slammer.

Wooster: I say, Jeeves, what's that when it's at home?

(Jeeves shimmies over and hands Wooster the glass)

Jeeves: If sir would care to try it?

Wooster: Urgh! It's all bitter and sour and mixed up!

Jeeves: Right. That's it. I've had enough. If you're going to be beastly, I'm off. Goodbye.

(Door slams)

Wooster: No, Jeeves, come back. I need you. We all do!

(Jeeves heads for ferry to the continent. Wooster returns to the piano and mournfully sings 'You get a better investor at the Alliance and Leicester')

Peter *McLie*

YOU DON'T hear much about Stephen Fry these days, do you? Yet not so long ago young Stephen was featured on the front page of every newspaper and magazine in the land. Why so quiet, Stephen? Why don't you get a part in a West End play or, better still, join your old partner Dudley Moore for a new series of *Steptoe & Son*.

Wouldn't that be just grandy and dandy?

MY FRIEND Andrew Wilson has bought a new pair of pyjamas with a button on the trousers instead of the old cord.

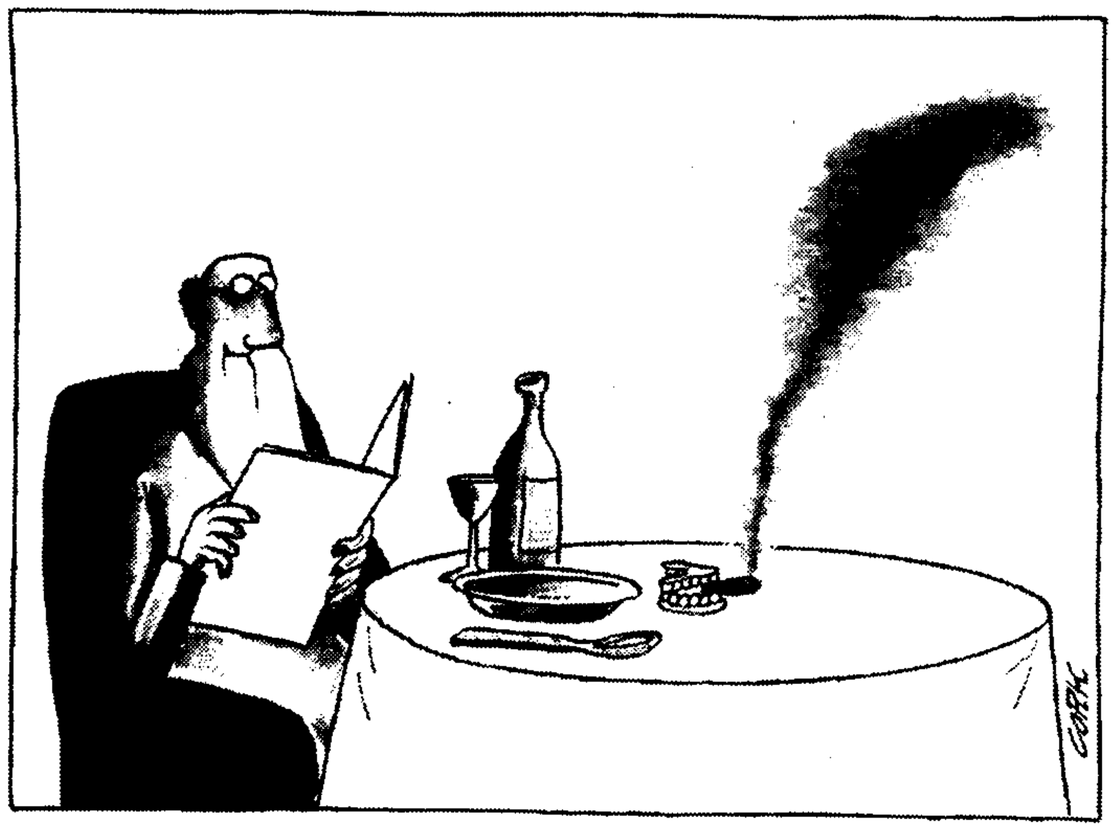
I find the world is divided into two groups — those who like buttons and those who prefer cords. And those whose pyjamas are fastened with a wee zip. *(That's three. Ed.)*

Are you a "cordie" or a "zippie"? Do write in and tell me and then I can fill up my column with another paragraph next time.

ONE of the perils of getting pissed every lunchtime (shurely 'getting older'? Ed) is that you begin to forget your own name. I have asked my friend Andrew Wilson if he has any idea who I am, but he has forgotten his own name as well.

If you have the remotest clue who I am, please write in and tell me. Just send a postcard to Peter McWho, The World's Worst Trouserpress, Somewhere in London.

"I don't think you've got the blues anyway. You're just neurotic"



STORM GROWS OVER 'OBSCENE' £1 MILLION PAY SHOCKER

by Our Business Staff
Sir Peter Paybotham

A HUGE ROW erupted last night after it was leaked that a former public service utility had agreed to pay out a "telephone number" salary-and-benefits package to one of their senior executives.

He is Sir Christopher Evans, 26, formerly head of Toothbrush plc, and before that one of the founders of the Big Breakfast media/leisure conglomerate.

Sir Christopher is to be paid £350,000 a year to act as part-time chairman of BBC Radio One's *Good Morning* show.

Good Evans

Defending the BBC's decision to pay Evans £2,000-a-minute, Mr Matthew Bannister, Chief Executive of the BBC's Remuneration Unit (Radio One), said angrily: "Sir Christopher is worth every penny. He is extremely hard working. He gets up very early. And he has an unrivalled knowledge of the breakfast radio industry.

"These days," Mr Bannister went on, "the intensively competitive international disc jockey market dictates that the best corporate talent will follow the highest available remuneration on a global basis.

"If the BBC had not snapped up Sir Christopher's services at a remarkably reasonable rate, he could well have been headhunted for a twelve-figure salary by Radio Milwaukee's *Good Morning Milwaukee* show.

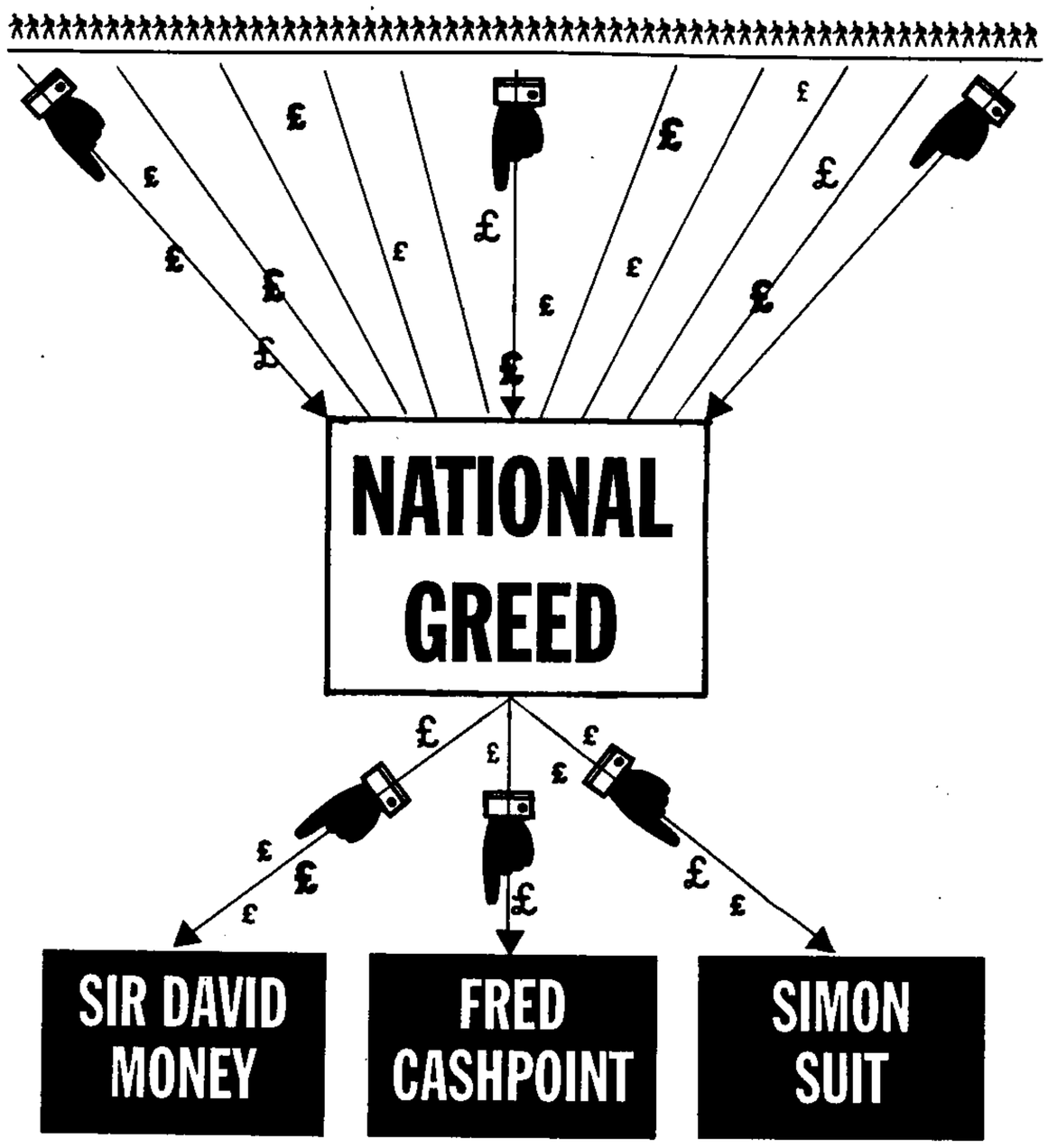
"When you think that he is only getting the same salary as some jumped-up little bureaucrat running North-West Water, you realise what a stupid world we are living in."

ANNOUNCEMENT

The artist hitherto known as Prince wishes it to be known that in future he wants to be called Charles. Charles feels that the title 'Prince' no longer suits him since it is perfectly clear that he is never going to be King.

EYE SCIENCE

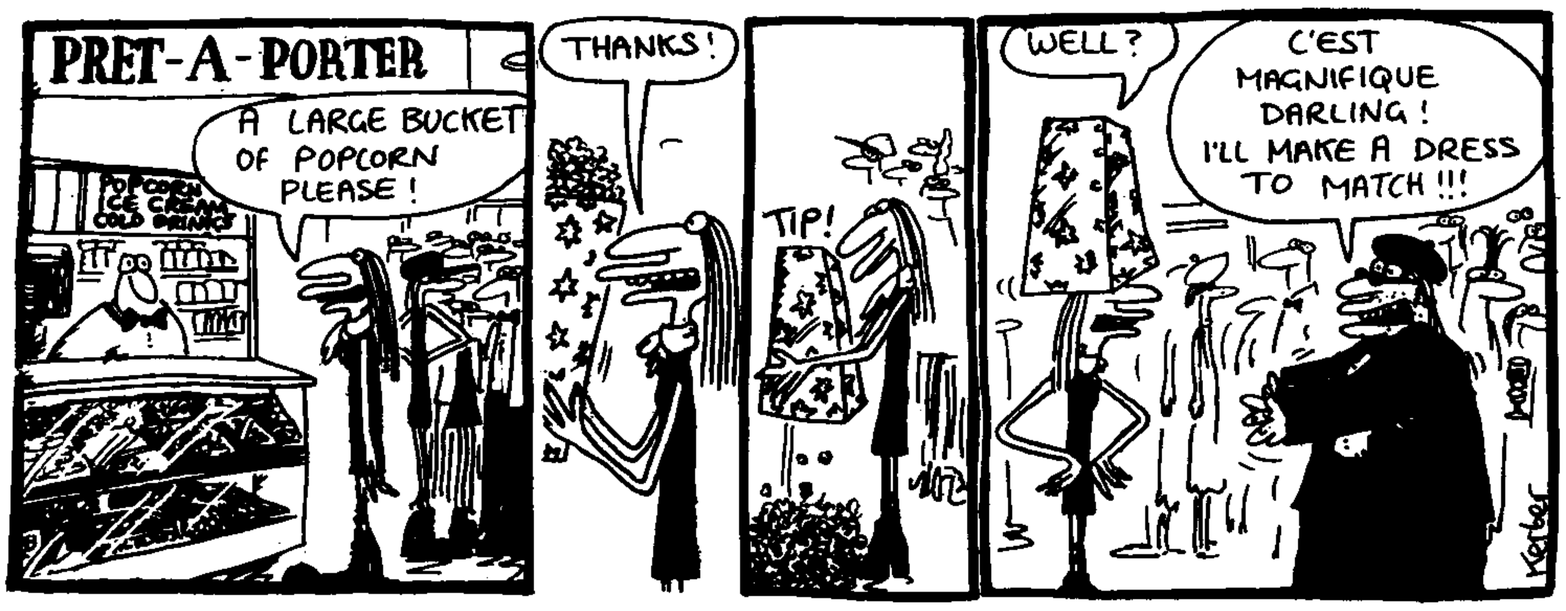
THE NATIONAL GREED How It Works



The principle is very simple. The primary generating resource is the consumer. Millions of these are bombarded with FDs (Final Demands) until they release a stream of money. This "cashflow", as it is known, eventually reaches the National Greed, where it is funnelled directly into the homes of the three directors, supplying all their money needs for millions of years to come.

SUPERMODELS

Neil Kerber



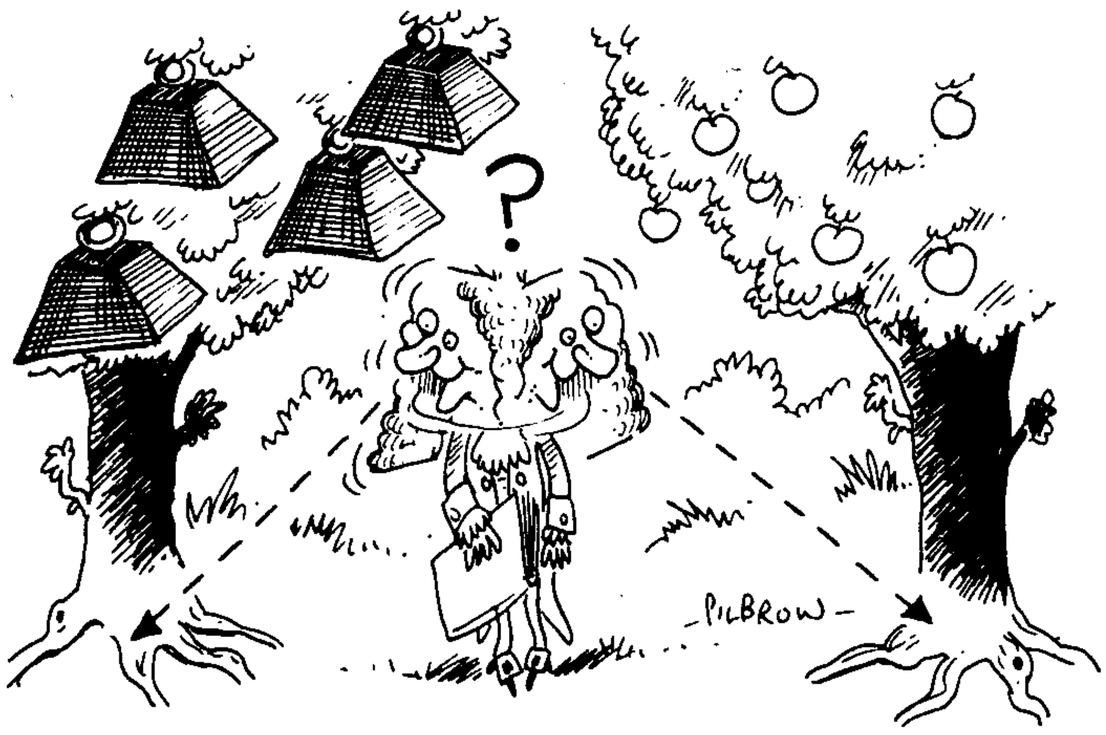
The successful applicant must by 18+, educated to GCSE grade English and maths, possess an excellent telephone manner, good keyboard skills, (min 40 wpm) and be able to spell correctly.

However, this isn't a job for the feint-hearted so you'll need a good sense of humour for the more hectic moments.

House Advertisement
North Devon Advertiser

"No authority in London is spending the kind of money as we have on schools. We've spent £30 over the past four years," he said.

Wandsworth Guardian



NEWTON'S BIG DECISION

Who is the new Dorothy Parker?

Asks the Eye Style Section

(having been to this new film and not having any ideas).

Research by GLENDA SLAGG, DAVID THOMAS and the INSIGHT TEAM.

SHE was the wittiest woman in the world, famed for such brilliant put-downs as "Is that a gun in your pocket or are you a policeman?" and "The only thing I wear in bed is my nightie."

Could there ever be a woman as funny again? Who today could match the 5ft-high powder keg of waspish wit and stunning sophistication who once said of President Roosevelt: "Either he is dead or my watch has stopped."

Is there an equivalent in Britain today of the Algonquin Round Table, which in its 1930s heyday comprised such immortal names as L.R. Vimmy, Chuck Ungleglow, Morton Mortensen and Samuel J. Pumpkin? NO.

Never mind. In the 1990s the women wits gather at London's Groucho Club to trade *bon mots* with the feistiest, funniest females in town.

Here they are:

Julie Bullshit

Sample quip:
"No one would want to join a club that had me as a member."

Mariella Frostrup

Sample quip:
"Did you see my show last night? I know it's late."

Janet Street-Porter

Sample quip:
"Who's that bloke over there with the sexy bum?"

Jaci Shtephen

Sample quip:
"Don't tell me the bar's closed. It's only 3.30 in the morning, for God's sake."

Suzanne Moore

Sample quip:
"Aren't men ghastly?"

(That's enough Dorothy Parkers. Ed.)

THEY FLEW TO BRUGES

A new Hercule Poirot Mystery by Dame Agatha Rumbold

(Jazzy saxophone music. Scene of thousands of English football fans arriving in mediaeval town of Bruges)

Poirot *(for it is he)*: So, 'astings, we return to the land of my birth, la Belle Belge, where I shall solve ze greatest mystery of my career — what do we do about ze English soccer 'ooligans?

Hastings: And what do we do, Poirot?

Poirot: 'ees simple, my friend 'astings. First we fire ze water cannon. Voila! Whoosh!

(Shot of hundreds of Chelsea fans being washed down street by high pressure jet)

Poirot: Zen, bop, bop on ze 'ead from ze riot police viz ze batons. Ola!

(Shot of hundreds of mounted police hitting helpless yobs over head)

Poirot: Finalement, mon ami, we herd zem into ze ferries, like ze poor little Eenglish veal calves, and so we say, adieu! Mais not au revoir!

(Shot of ferry leaving Bruges harbour)

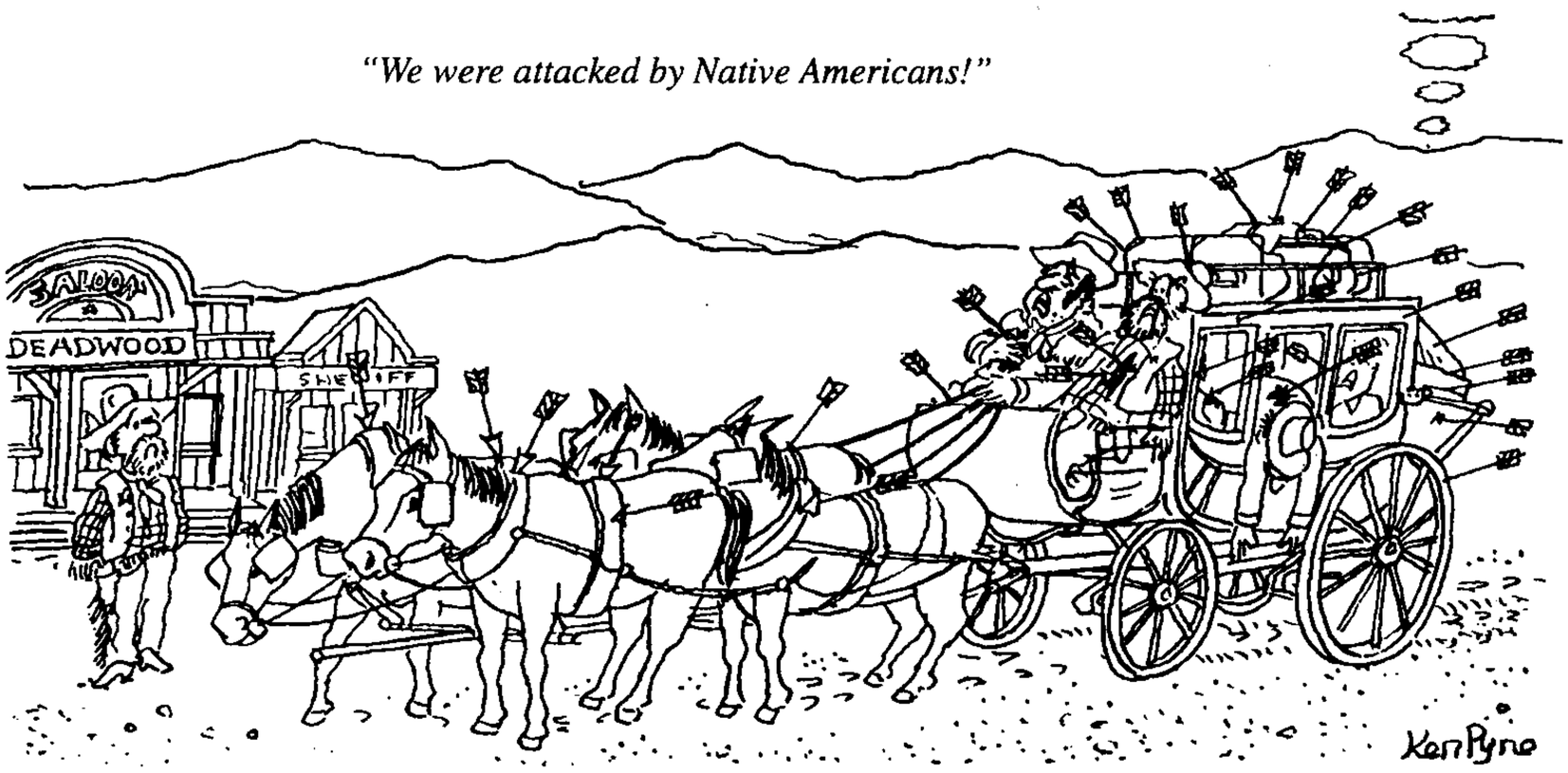
Poirot: So, 'astings, case solved.

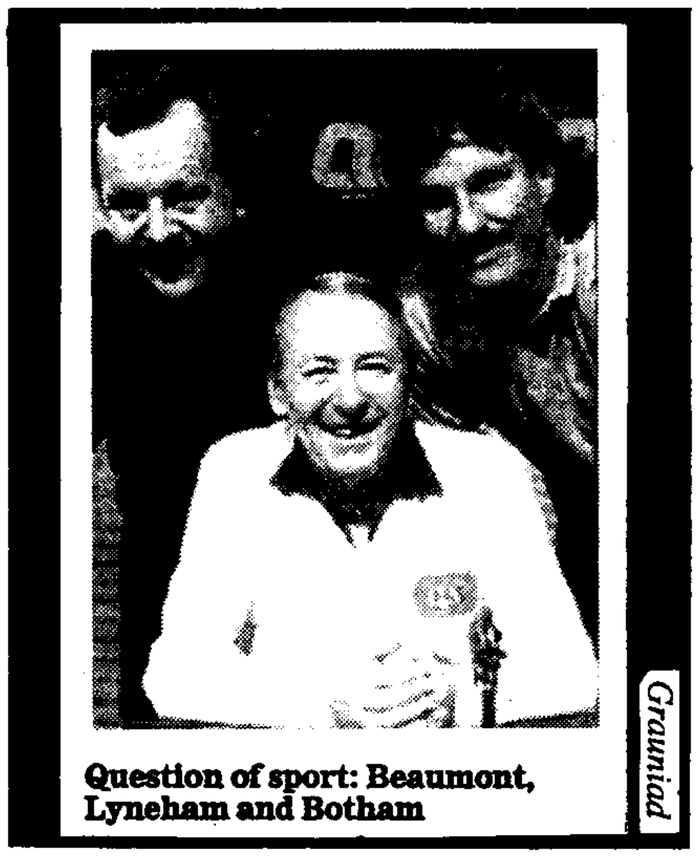
Hastings: I don't know how you do it, Poirot. You are truly a genius.

Poirot: It is just a matter of ze little grey cells, mon ami, where our friends will spend ze night on zair return to England. Ha ha ha.

(Poirot is hit on head by full lager can and falls unconscious to ground. Silly music and credits)

"We were attacked by Native Americans!"





Question of sport: Beaumont, Lyneham and Botham

Grauniad

DIARY

Let me take you out of your comfort zone. In the 1990s we have a society that has become insane, totally but totally totally insane. You step out onto the sidewalk to pick a flower for your Shaman and what happens? You know what happens? Yep, you're gunned down in your psychic space by a gang of ten victims of government hypocrisy. And what happens to those ten poor guys with their two-bit guns and their no-chance lives after they've left you with blood gushing and gurgling out of your goddamned throat? They've been impacted and conflicted by events outside their control. They've entered that vast and bizarre web of cruel, totalitarian punishments reserved for victims of the zeitgeist, patrolled by cops, wardens, the media and the government, all of them operating a facelessly oppressive system that seeks to stamp out the individual who happens to like expressing himself by killing people.

We are living through a civilisation zone that has been ruthlessly ghettoised. In socio-political terms, we are witnessing the fin-de-sieclarisation of our culturalling of the zeitgiestation. And to globalise it for a second, that's kinda scary. It takes a modern-day Swiftian to explore this whole concept, so my aim in the makingisation of *Natural Born Killers* was to prove myself as savage as the great Jonathan Swiftian.

Words of Peace and Tranquillity (1): As a Buddhist, my Native American holistic primal therapy rainforest hypnotherapist Swami Dosh is a man of infinital wisdomisation and serenitudinality. "Oliver," he once communicated with me over a lettuce. "The time has come for me to tell you this. You must listen carefully, my son. Many paths lie ahead of you, but the path that is best for you is the path that leads you to wheresoever you wish to travel. Take it, and you shall be rewarded. Great party my place midnight, bring juicy young chick with red-hot ass my son, that'll be 800 dollars next please".

Question. Who killed Richard M. Nixon? The answer's the subject of my next movie, "Milhous". The guy was not old — barely sixty years of age or more — and he was just relaxing in intensive care one day when — phhfffft! — blown away, another corpse in the trashcan from a century that's given us a billion corpses, all of them dead.

My movie confirms by overturning all available evidence that Milhous's life was placed in the terminalisation mode by a consortium made up of President Fidel Castro, three shadowy Frenchmen, a small but closely-knit group of Vietnam veterans, the Mafia, three ex-members

OLIVER STONE

of Jefferson Airplane, a group of East Coast McDonald's franchisees, a leading unnamed drum majorette, chairman Deng Xiaoping of China, a well-known talk-show host whose true identity remains a closely-guarded secret, the present king of Great Britain, the O'Jays, Grassy Noel, NASA, Quentin Tarantino, eight international media moguls, Howard Hughes (don't try and kid me he's dead: no way), Tonya Harding, the East Koreans, Madame Marcos, the CIA, Carlos the Jackal and Sister Wendy Beckett of England. But the Establishment cannot tolerate being turmoiled by a true artist. So the outcome has been inevitablised: Government and media and the oppressive forces of state control have conspired to destabilize societal truths by suggesting Milhous died of — can you believe it?— "natural causes". I'm not gonna buy that — are *you* gonna buy that?

Words of Peace and Tranquillity (2) "Oliver, my son, you cannot blow away the face of a man," my swami once told me, "without loading first your handgun." I now apply this philosophy to all my art, including this scene from my latest movie "Persuasion", script by Jane Austen and Oliver Stone:

Sir Walter Elliott *(drawing out a handkerchief and daintily rubbing his cheek with it):* Fuck you fucking fuckass — you fuck with that fucker, I'll fuck your fuckass.

Mr Frederick Wentworth *(replacing his fork upon his plate whilst discreetly loading his .357):* Don't you fuck with me you fucking fuck — suck on this, motherfucker.

Sir Walter Elliot: Arrrrrgggggggghhhh! Urrgggggghhhhhhh! Gurrrrrrggggaaaargh!

Doctor Stanley *(feeling pulse):* He's fucking dead. It's the media I blame.

Tarantino. Did someone just say Tarantino? Love the guy. You know what? He's got a great future, Tarantino. Quentin Tarantino. Yep. He has more talent that guy in his little finger than he has in all the rest of his fingers, and that's not counting his thumbs. Peace. I'd say of all the young movie-makers around, right, Quentin makes the greatest rock promos of them all, except for the guys who do it professionally. Like, *Pulp Fiction.* I saw it, all of it, most all of it, it's great, almost great, I'm happy for Quentin, very happy, 'cos, you know, he hasn't had many successes. I just hope he hasn't taken it too bad that after all that great publicity the movie hasn't generated great box-office. Didn't you know that? But a movie like that, directed at kids, it can never hope to do as good as a mature director's movie, like, say, *Natural Born Killers* — a movie with different levels of socio-political commentary and great strong shallows of depth, a movie that's tough enough to face society hard-on, disregardless of the consequentialitalisations. Yep, Tarantino. Love the guy.

Words of Wisdom (3): "If he is to find enlightenment, man must follow the middle way. The middle way is the way we know best: right through the brain and out the other fucking side, splashing the bloody innards all over the whitewashed walls — beautiful; and howsabout Suede on soundtrack?"

Ours is a mad society high on gratuitous violence. Only by showing this violence performed with incredible wit and style by two of the spunkiest actors in the world backed by some truly incredible rock — Patti Smith, Nine Inch Nails, Caustic Peach, Van Halen — can we hope to show the stark and brutal horror of it all. And the fun too. Like I mean, the kids these days are talking about murder in less absolute terms, and it's up to serious artists like myself to show the more positive side of killing. Every morning on set, we'd jam on the music, drive the lights wild and get high on the energy of shotgun blasts. All I'm asking is that we as human animals are prepared to face up to the good side of killing, not just the bad. Like, it can be great exercise, and if it does something to reduce the over-population statistics, well, that can only be great too. As a societal grouping, we've got to learn to see things in a relativistic context. What are 52 murders in *Natural Born Killers* compared with 100 million murders this century? Guess we got some catching up to do, but there's always another movie, another day. And in a world gone crazy, it's all about holding on to my sanitude, right?

"I don't know much about art but I know what I like to talk about in a very loud voice!"

9.2 The general wording of Section 3(1) PCCA 1973 above should not be used to excuse vague requirements (criticized by Lord Goddard in a Practice Note (1952) 35 CR APP ER 207).

Requirements of the probation order

UK YEAR OF LITERATURE AND WRITTING 1995 — 35,000.00
Somerset Place
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Grant Winners list
Foundation for Sports & Arts

Literary Review

Putting out the trash

Nicole Brown Simpson: The Private Diary Of A Life Interrupted
Faye Resnick with Mike Walker
Dove Books, $14.95

I Want To Tell You
O.J. Simpson
Little, Brown, $19.95

IT had to happen. Simpson mania has spread to the world of "literature".

Broadly defined, of course.

Books on the case include a journalist's account of the marriage, at number five on the NY bestseller list; a handbook for those following the trial on TV ("from the comfort of your own home!"); and two books by participants: *Nicole Brown Simpson: The Diary of a Life Interrupted*, by self-styled Nicole-friend Faye Resnick; and *Let Me Tell You*, by O.J. Simpson. Both are bestsellers.

A close textual analysis of these books reveals... only that at the moment, Americans will read *anything* that is even remotely connected to the Simpson case.

Resnick's book finally answers the two questions that have been on everyone's lips these last nine months: "Who did Faye Resnick and Nicole sleep with between 1989 and 1994, and what famous people did they meet during that time?" Resnick answers the first question in a style to make Jackie Collins blush: "[It] was not Brett [Shaves] whom Nicole took as her first lover after filing for divorce. It was Marcello, her hairdresser..." Later: "That very night, Nicole and Brett finally became lovers..." Resnick makes sure we have all the vital details of her own life too: "That same month, I left the home Christian and I had shared together... I started dating Albert Gersten... Sadly, Albert and I broke up shortly afterwards... I missed Christian." Never again will you know more about something about which you care less.

And there is the incessant name-dropping. "Keith came over to our table. He wanted us to join the owner of the Monkey Bar, Jack Nicholson's best friend... who was sitting with Don Henley. Nicole and I had never met Don before [but already they seem to be on first-name terms], so went over to their table and had a great time... Then we took off for Bar One. Prince was there... we saw that Arsenio Hall was seated next to our table..."

Find this a little thin for $16? Faye was obviously worried you might. So she pads the book out with a "Sisters, unite!" polemic. Unfortunately her own credentials seem a little weak. She tries to rally women in outrage that O.J. could contemplate telling a woman called Kathryn, the fiancée of football player Marcus Allen, that Marcus and Nicole had had an affair, because, Resnick writes, this would hurt and humiliate Kathryn ("a sweet woman"). O.J. never did tell her; and it is left to the readers to work out that Faye herself has just spilled the beans in a national bestseller. Solidarity, sisters!

But the choicest moment of the book is a single, innocent, throwaway aside that perfectly encapsulates the lifestyle of Resnick and her crowd: "Almost every woman I know has had breast implants."

Where Resnick's book is pseudo-salacious and trite, O.J.'s response is childlike and trite. Half the book consists of letters to O.J. from children; some of them under 18.

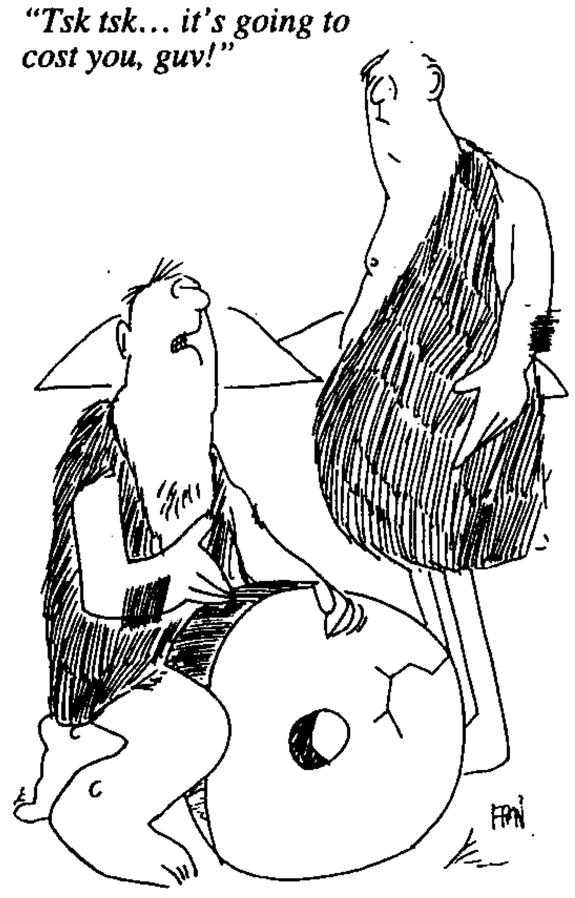
"Dear O.J. I am six year [sic] old. I love you — you did not do it." Can anyone now doubt the man's innocence? Most of the letters have a religious theme, a typical one telling him: "As followers of Jesus Christ it is not for us to judge you, only to love you and to forgive your human frailties, as Christ continually does for each of His children... Ask the Lord, Jesus Christ, into your life..."

O.J.'s responses, which take up the rest of the book, are for the most part on a similar Sunday-school level. "This tragedy has changed my relationship with God, how I relate to God. I think about God a lot now. I do believe that God was trying to get my attention and this trouble is God's way of getting my attention. And he has gotten my attention." I should bloody well think so.

It's hard not to hoot with laughter at the caption under a photo of O.J. and his girlfriend Paula Barbieri: "Paula doesn't look very spiritual in this picture, but she sure is." The entire book reads like an eight-year-old's class assignment.

Simpson's protests of his innocence are predictable, but amid the waffle he makes one interesting point. That is his comment that "the answer to the death of Nicole and Mr Goldman lies somewhere in the world that Faye Resnick inhabited." If Ms Resnick's book is an accurate portrayal of that world, maybe they weren't murdered by O.J. or a mysterious drug gang after all. Maybe they committed suicide.

"Tsk tsk... it's going to cost you, guv!"



Books & Bookmen

□ FABER and Faber's staff are never slow to gird their loins, and a big push is already underway for Kazuo Ishiguro's new one. Fearful of losing him, the firm shelled out £300,000 in a rather more discreet deal than the Amis fiasco. Alas, he has delivered a 550-page novel crasher on the *Finnegans Wake* scale.

There is widespread astonishment that the delicate observation of his earlier work has given way to such a monster, and that the modest-mannered author has fallen prey to an elephantiasis that makes even Timothy Mo pale.

Editors and reviewers lumbered with the thing have set telephones ringing, each delicately broaching the subject, wondering whether they have missed the point. "How many pages did you manage?" has been the heartfelt cry. Superhuman effort is required to get beyond 100. Six years' work.

■ AFTER a rash of enforced departures and resignations, London's literary editors are engaged in a complicated game of musical chairs.

With Bill Buford off to become fiction editor of the *New Yorker*, the shortlist for the *Granta* job (which includes the running of the seriously loss-making Granta Books) grows ever longer: smart money is on Frances Coady, who currently runs Random House's literary imprints.

Meanwhile the *Guardian* lit ed's job is still unfilled, although lunches have so far been offered to Jan Dalley (who obviously has great faith in her current employers, the *Independent on Sunday*) and John Lanchester, deputy editor of the *London Review of Books*.

As if this weren't enough, *Sunday Times* lit ed Harry Richie finally lost patience with his beleaguered superior John Witherow and resigned — following the example of his deputy, Sabine Durrant, whose patience had run out two days before.

The *Sunday Times* will presumably now go through its traditional ritual of lunching every literary sub-celeb whose name occurs to it, none of whom will eventually want the job. Ironically *Sunday Times* book section hacks are said to be lobbying furiously for the return of former editor John Walsh, installed only last week as Robert Winder's replacement at the *Independent*. Confusing, isn't it?

'Bookworm'

footnotes

Bottomley's pit

"Sooner or later everyone has got to go... CONTEMPORARY"

— Old Lionel Bart Song

■ C.C.T. STANDS FOR compulsory competitive tendering, the process by which the government forces councils to sell public enterprises to private firms. Here is an intriguing example of how it works.

Back in 1989, in Lady Porter's Westminster council, David Bryant was director of leisure and Roger Bottomley was his deputy. Both decided to swap their boring council jobs for the exciting world of free enterprise.

Bottomley set up City Centre Leisure, which bid for and won a contract to run two leisure centres in the Westminster area. Bryant's ambitions were more glamorous. He recruited other council leisure chieftains — Tim Kiernan from Camden, Douglas Stewart from Hackney and Robert Hulbert from Glasgow — to form Contemporary Leisure.

This mighty team of ex-leisure directors then swanned around the country bidding to run council swimming pools, golf clubs and leisure centres. Their early successes were formidable. At Weston-super-Mare, for instance, they won an eight-year contract to run four leisure centres. The council there was specially glad to welcome a firm headed by such a reliable quartet. The previous contractor, Holton Hotels, had just collapsed.

Before long, however, there was a hitch. Mr Hulbert from Glasgow had joined Contemporary under a false name (John Smith) without telling his employers, Glasgow council. He then bid for work in Bolton by inventing non-existent contracts. When his Glasgow colleagues found out, they sacked Hulbert for gross misconduct.

The Hulbert scandal spread quickly round the councils, some of whom lost their enthusiasm for Contemporary Leisure. Hulbert obviously had to go, but he was protected by a guaranteed golden handshake of the type which modern businessmen have come to expect. Contemporary Leisure,

***MAN OF LEISURE:** Roger Bottomley*

already strapped for cash, had to lob him a nice little "sweetener to quit" — £95,000.

In spite of the Hulbert disaster, Contemporary went on clinching contracts all over Britain — a £2 million contract in Hillingdon, west London, led the field, followed closely by two others worth £1.7 million, to run a golf course and two swimming pools in Redbridge, east London. Smaller contracts were won in Bath, Croydon, Rickmansworth, Bournemouth, Kingston, Bromley and Weybridge.

Mr Bryant travelled at the company's expense to Canada where he lobbied for a swimming pool contract in Ontario. By 1993, 13 contracts had been won at a value of £5.3 million. David Bryant brimmed over with self-importance. In the 1993 report to shareholders he boasted that the success of the company was a success for the nation. "As a company grows," he drooled, "so does its contribution to the national economy. The payments to central government through PAYE, national insurance, VAT, corporation tax etc exceeded £1,170,000 in 1992-93." Councils, he added, were getting business rates from the company which were being passed on to fill "the national pot".

But not for long. By the end of 1993 the complaints were flooding in. Filthy swimming pools, unkept golf courses, useless equipment. Staff were sacked, accounts abandoned, records ignored. As early as July 1993, Wiltshire county council kicked Contemporary off a leisure centre contract because of "alleged accounting irregularities". In December 1994 the company collapsed. It called in an administrator, Marshalls of Poole, who estimate that Contemporary owes "approximately £2m" more than they can pay — including £1.4 million in unpaid PAYE, national insurance and VAT, prompt payments of which Mr Bryant boasted about a year previously.

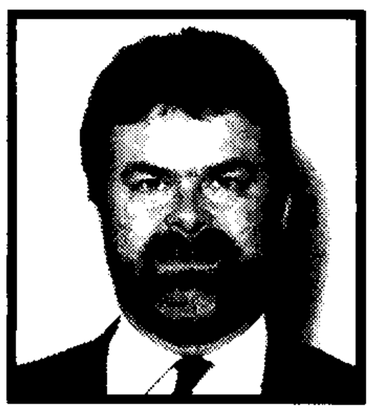
Redbridge has had to fork out at least a quarter of a million pounds in wages of workers who had to be sacked and rehired. Most of the stricken councils are arguing with the insurance companies about the value of the "bonds" they had to take out against the likelihood of failure of the company to which they had been bullied by CCT into handing over their enterprises.

So much for Bryant and Co. How did that other Shirley Porter fan, Roger Bottomley, get on after his CCT successes in Westminster? His firm City Centre Leisure has lost the contracts to run the two leisure centres. City Centre had borrowed £724,000 from the Natwest bank to pay for investment on the leisure centres. The bank would never have lent the money unless the corrupt Westminster council had agreed to guarantee the loan.

Whoops! At once, the district auditor wrote to the council advising it of his view that the loan guarantee to City Centre was illegal. So the council refuses to honour its own guarantee. Now Mr Bottomley's firm, staring ruin in the face, is suing his former council for payment of the money which it illegally guaranteed.

There seems to be no end to the chaos of CCT — *C*ouncil *C*ash for *T*ories as it is now widely known. When Ilford South Labour MP Mike Gapes demanded in a Commons adjournment debate last month that the government should act to put an end to the "whiff of corruption and some form of local government mafia", the minister, Robert Jones, replied that the government would do absolutely nothing — except insist that the same contracts be put out to tender once again so that a few more dynamic entrepreneurs can fool around with yet more taxpayers' money until they in turn go bust to make way for the next lot.

MIKE GAPES MP



ROBERT JONES MP

RIDING HIGH

■ TRAINING and enterprise councils (TECs) are funded with public money and are therefore anxious to answer questions about what they do with it.

The *Eye* asked Essex TEC:

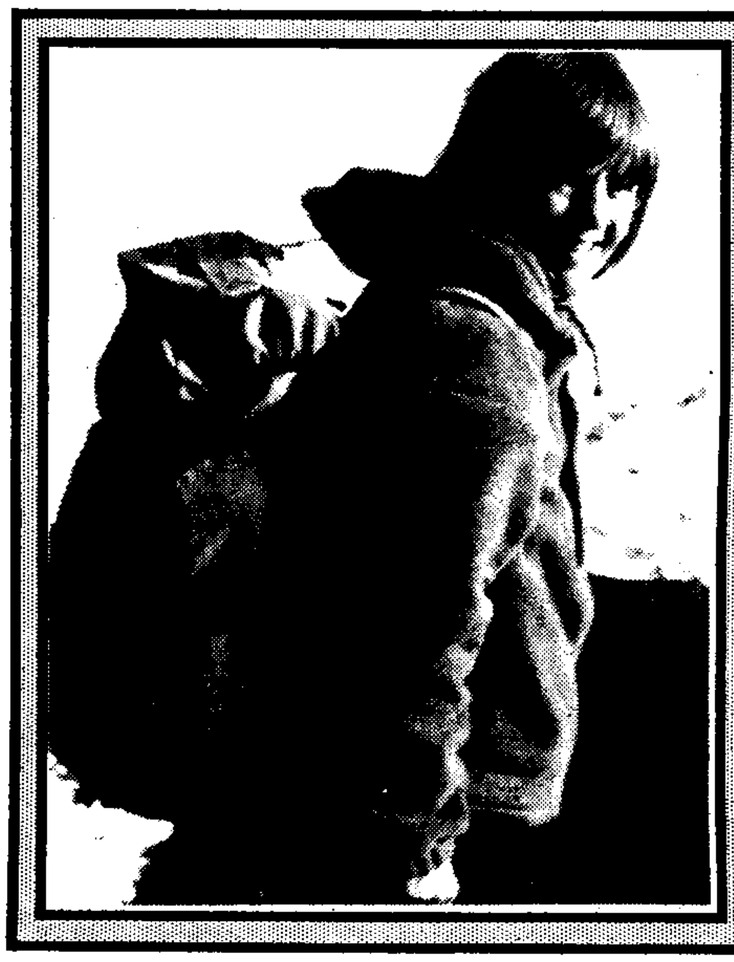
1 Why were Raytel Insurance Brokers (chairman: Roy Lawrence, former chairman of Essex TEC) chosen for the TEC's insurance and pensions business, worth about £40,000?

2 Were other companies invited to tender for the contract?

3 Why did the TEC spend £20,000 on building a riding school on property owned by Mr Lawrence?

4 Did the riding school offer training opportunities — if so, how many?

Here comes the reply from a "senior member of staff", who would not give his name: "We have no comment to make whatsoever".



Saint Greaves

■ **CAN anyone identify the mountain rescue service to which Jacqueline Greaves gave the money she got from the papers after her dramatic rescue this time last year in The Cairngorms?**

Braemar Mountain Rescue team, which first found her, tells the *Eye* it hasn't had a penny from her. Nor has any of the other mountain rescue teams in Scotland.

When she was rescued, the newspapers clamoured for Mrs Greaves's survival story. She sold it to the *Sun* for £20,000. She told the *Daily Express* (17 February 1994): "Of course I will be making a considerable donation to the mountain rescue teams. I owe them my life."

To the *Eye* today, Mrs Greaves is more circumspect. "I won't tell the papers what I've done with the money. I won't comment. But I did give much of it away."

Quantum Heap

DAVID BROWN, chief executive of Quantum Care, which runs 31 old people's homes in Hertfordshire, told the *Eye* last month that the shocking short-staffing at Bulwer Lyttton home was an "isolated incident". But was it?

The *Eye* has obtained some inspectors' reports for other Quantum homes.

At Millbrook, Ware (48 residents), two bungalows were found to be completely unstaffed. At the bungalow reserved for elderly and medically ill people there was only one member of staff on duty. "This could be potentially hazardous and therefore negligent," reported the inspectors last September.

At Minsden, Hitchin (61 residents), the inspectors reported last June: "The staffing levels are not adequate."

At Fourfields, Cheshunt (48 residents), the inspectors reported last May: "The rota does not reveal a satisfactory staffing establishment is being provided to meet residents' needs."

The report from Millbrook was by far the worst of these. The inspectors' visit to Millbrook was not announced. In the other three cases the staff had advance warning of the inspections.

A mysterious fact to emerge from the reports is the high proportion of Quantum Care residents packed in three or four to a room. This compares oddly with the latest annual report of the county council inspectors which declares: "Quantum Care has ceased the use of 3 and 4 bedded rooms."

Another mystery is the most recent routine report of the inspectors at Bulwer Lytton House, the home which caused the controversy over the death of Mrs Ethel Empson, as revealed in the last *Eye*. After Mrs Empson died, her family complained so bitterly about her treatment at the home that a special inquiry was set up. The resulting report, which we quoted, exposed the most shocking staff shortages and negligence. Yet the routine report three months earlier — last September — was bland in the extreme. It congratulated the home's management and did not even mention the appalling staff shortages exposed in the special report.

These mysteries and shortages have had little effect on a consortium of banks which last week signed an agreement to lend Quantum Care £30 million.

Herts CC tell the Eye they are "broadly satisfied with the current staffing levels at the Quantum Care homes", and Quantum care say: "all our homes staffed to guidelines which are accepted across the care sector".

PS: Quantum Care won the Watford Electronics Employer of the Year Award in the 1994 Hertfordshire business awards. The award was presented by Lord Brocket, who has since been arrested and charged with a multi-million pound insurance fraud.

BRIGHT PARKE

■ THE CLOSE relationship between ministry of defence civil servants and the companies who win contracts from the MoD has so shocked Lord Justice Scott he has sent a memo about it to his sleazebusting colleague, Lord Justice Nolan.

At the MoD, however, they are cool about the whole thing. They insist that any civil servant who wants to join a private company supplying the ministry must get permission first.

But what about Lt Commander Chris Parke? He was part of the royal navy pensions and payroll team which provided technical and administrative support to the top dogs who had to decide which company should get the lucrative contract for a relational database management system. Last April, a company called Informix was chosen. Even before he left the Navy last month, Lt Commander Parke joined Informix.

Presumably being the sort of chap who obeys the rules, he got permission first. Well no, actually, he didn't. A navy spokesman described him quaintly as a "poor old worker bee who by dint of his own misadventure forgot to fill in the forms". When a question was asked in parliament about him, the lieutenant commander suddenly asked for retrospective permission to join the company he'd already joined.

In case you are worried about him, don't be. "There doesn't seem to be any objection," says the navy spokesman. "It's all going very smoothly."

Stagecoach Hold-Up?

■ STAGECOACH, the bus company run by Scottish millionaires Brian Souter and his sister Ann Gloag, has set a new record for the most investigations by the monopolies and mergers commission (MMC).

SHEFFIELD

In 1993 a group of bus managers formed Sheffield Mainline to buy bus routes around south Yorkshire from the councils. There was a lot of excited propaganda about "returning" the buses to the people who managed it, but — whoops! — Stagecoach snapped up 20 per cent. The MMC is investigating a potential monopoly.

STRATHCLYDE

In 1993 bus workers bought Strathclyde Buses (1,300 buses) — the largest operator in Glasgow — from the council. In the same year bus workers bought Kelvin Central from the council. There was a lot of excited propaganda about "returning" the buses to the people who worked on them, but — whoops! — in 1994 Strathclyde gobbled up Kelvin Central. The MMC is investigating a potential monopoly. Almost at once — whoops! — Stagecoach snapped up 20 per cent of the shares of Strathclyde. The MMC is investigating a potential monopoly.

THE NORTH-EAST

In 1994 Stagecoach bought Busways Travel, the main bus operator for Tyne and Wear; Welcome Buses, Gateshead; Cleveland Transport, Middlesbrough, Stockton and Hull; and Hartlepool Transport.

EVANGELISTS: Ann Gloag and her brother Brian Souter

In Darlington, the evangelicals met some annoying resistance. The council, which ran Darlington Transport, agreed to sell to the highest bidder, Yorkshire Traction, which had the cheek to offer more money than Stagecoach. Stagecoach responded in the highest traditions of fair play and free enterprise by shoving free buses on all the town's main routes. After three days Darlington Transport collapsed and Yorkshire Traction withdrew its offer, leaving the roads clear for Stagecoach. The MMC is investigating a potential monopoly and alleged anti-competitive practices in the whole north-east area.

That makes four investigations at the same time: easily a record.

Are Mr Souter and Ms Gloag unduly troubled by these inquiries? The signs suggest otherwise. In 1993 Mr Souter told the *Eye* that he and his sister "realised" £11 million from the flotation of Stagecoach. Last year they went on to "realise" £2.4 million in dividends. Their remaining shares are now worth more than £130 million. Naturally Ann Gloag has been awarded an honorary degree from Queen Margaret College, Edinburgh, for her "contribution to Scottish business".

STOP PRESS: On 6 February a rather exasperated Scottish traffic commissioner banned a Stagecoach subsidiary, Western Scottish Buses, from operating services between Ayr and Dalmellington for a year. The commissioner was not pleased that Stagecoach was plainly operating a new service before it had been authorised with a view to knocking its competitor out of the (free) market.

THE THINGS THEY SAY

"Hunting is good exercise for horses and there is something inherently noble and nothing cruel in the great and glorious death of a fox in the field"

Alan Duncan, Tory MP for Rutland and Melton, House of Commons, 31 January

Deaf Leppard

■ HERE'S A little tale about *Sunday Times* editor John Witherow and reporter David Leppard, heroes of the Michael Foot — KGB affair.

In December 1993 *File on Four* decided to give the *Sunday Times* a taste of their scoop on the Lockerbie bombing. They gave it to David Leppard in exchange for the usual credits high up in the story. When the story appeared as Leppard's own, with the credit to the BBC buried deep down in paragraph 27, *File on Four* complained. It received a most helpful letter from Andrew Neil.

"I've investigated your letter and agree you have cause for complaint. It was a BBC story you had been kind enough to advance to us and the niggardly credit we gave the BBC amounted in effect to a hi-jacking of the story. This is not the way I expect the *Sunday Times* to behave and I have made that clear to the journalist involved. Please accept my apologies. It will not happen again."

The letter was copied to then deputy editor, John Witherow.

You can write to Paul Foot at 6 Carlisle Street, London W1V 5RG, or leave a message for him on 071 287 3183

In the City

FOOLS *and* rogues. That must be the verdict on the Barings fiasco where the investigations and the resignations will continue even though the bank and its depositors would appear to have been saved.

Fools — and greedy fools at that — in that it is increasingly obvious that the chain of command that stretched from the supposed "rogue trader" Nick Leeson to the trading and treasury desks and beyond at Barings' Bishopsgate headquarters was more than prepared to allow him to take mindboggling and potentially bank-busting risks in pursuit of bigger and better profits and bonuses. Risks that it seems some at Barings did not fully appreciate. So how could they police what they didn't understand?

Rogues because it now seems clear from the evidence emerging out of Singapore, whose authorities are clearly not going to take the fall as Barings seemed to have hoped, that the bank was less than frank: first with the Bank of England; then with the Serious Fraud Office; and finally with the press in explaining the scale and cause of the crisis.

But then the respectable old boy face of Barings, represented by chairman Peter Baring (a man who knew either too much or more likely, too little) has for several years been little more than a City gent front which hid an organisation increasingly dominated by "Loadsamoney" characters like Leeson.

Still, despite facing a self-inflicted disaster of epic proportions, Barings' directors never lost their traditional arrogance. At all times until the end they seemed to believe that the Bank of England would have no alternative but to save such a prestigious name for the good of the City, and to do so would press-gang the high street banks and rival City names into a Barings lifeboat.

The arrogance, ignorance and stupidity (always a fatal combination) of the two senior Barings directors most involved in supervising the department responsible for Leeson and who presented the Barings bill to the Bank of England — deputy chairman Andrew Tuckey and Peter Norris, head of the investment banking division — did much to ensure that there would be no rescue.

How not to win confidence and influence potential rescuers is to disclose that you have no real idea of the cost of the rescue. Within 24 hours the bill had doubled to a staggering £650-700 million. The true loss it now seems will be nearer £900 million. Such figures only proved how little many of those at the crisis meetings also knew about the high-risk world of derivatives dealing.

But then just how ignorant were Tuckey and Norris of the true figures? After all, it now emerges that only a few weeks before Barings had transferred $900 million from London to Singapore to cover the escalating losses of Leeson's Japanese market gamble and the accelerating margin calls. Not only that, but group treasurer Anthony Hawes had been summoned to Singapore to be asked about Barings' exposure and had assured the local financial regulators that all was known and all was well.

Just how much Bank of England governor Eddie George and his officials were told of that part of the Singapore story is less than clear; but "not a lot" would seem to be the case given the rush with which Fast Eddie subscribed to the "rogue trader — could happen to any bank" cover story/alibi.

No doubt now, courtesy of the Singapore revelations and Leeson's threat to "name names", governor George must feel, like Chancellor Kenneth Clarke, that he was being taken for a ride — by fools or rogues, neither variety worth saving.

Now of course Peter Baring and his crew of "hear no evil, see no risk" suits claim they were mislead by "Loadsamoney" Leeson. Well maybe yes, maybe no. There are none so blind as those blinded first by greed and then by fear.

As Joseph Jett and the $350,000,000 false profits scam at Kidder Peabody proved, it is not possible for one man to bring the house down alone. No matter how clever or devious he always needs help from colleagues and superiors either in terms of sins of commission or omission. The same goes for Nick Leeson and Barings. At Kidder Peabody, the internal investigation launched by outraged owners General Electric soon discovered the culprits in the executive suite and they were on their way.

For what nobody who either knows Barings or banking believes is that it was possible for an essentially small-time trader like Leeson to fool all the time either the top two local Barings honchos in Singapore, James Bax and Simon Jones, or their and Leeson's bosses in London — chief trader Ron Baker, Norris and Tuckey. Especially as it now emerges that Bax had warned of possible disaster in 1992 when Leeson was set in motion, and when the warning was given even louder and clearer in August last year following an internal audit of the Leeson operation which highlighted the danger of letting him not only handle the trades but also control the back office settlement of his own deals.

That such an obvious recipe for disaster was allowed to exist and then to continue is a tell-tale signal that Leeson had a lot of friends in high places at Barings. According to a former Barings executive, in no other overseas trading centre was such a dangerous arrangement allowed.

But then Nick Leeson, the man fined for indecent exposure in a Singapore disco, was perhaps the most pampered of Barings' "little princelings" — the dealers whom the bank increasingly relied upon to make their own and everyone else's bonuses. All eyes and hopes were on Singapore and Leeson. Until it was too late — when he had put Barings $7 billion in the hole — Leeson was protected by those in Singapore and in London who either relied on him or who did not want to rock their own boat. After all, if he was right (which they must have increasingly hoped and prayed) then the bank would clean up. And if he was wrong, well: as it was Barings there would be a lender of last resort. The internal failures would be covered up and Leeson would take the fall.

No doubt such thoughts occurred to the dumb but not stupid Leeson when he activated his flight plan and headed for home. Being locked up in Singapore while the authorities looked for the key did not appeal. And once back safely in London he could have pulled the strings to perhaps cover up the scandal at least enough to prevent extradition. And maybe he too believed a failure was impossible because Barings was unsinkable.

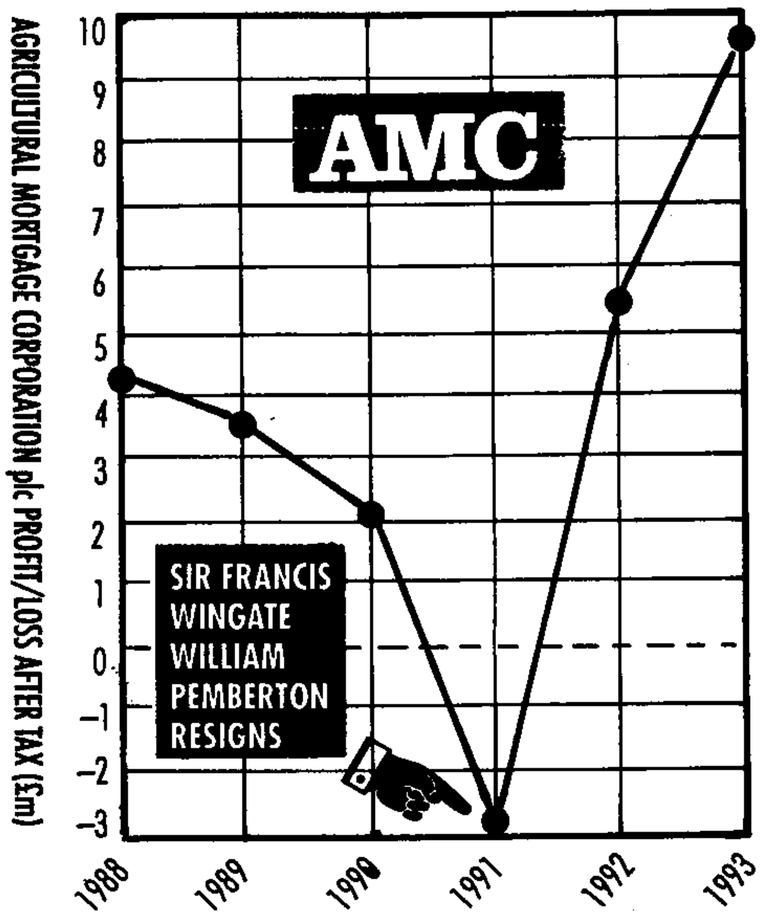
Where Peter Baring fits into the combination of failed supervision and attempted cover-up also remains unclear. His initial attempt to blame Leeson alone and talk about a conspiracy suggests, in the most charitable interpretation, that he was not kept fully informed by those below him. A less kindly incredulous assessment of his explanation was: "The knee jerk reaction of a jerk."

But then this line seems to have been retailed also to the SFO, which appears to have been given only part of the story when asked to investigate "a fraud on Barings" rather than, as Singapore would suggest, a "fraud in Barings". Little matters like in-house warnings from long ago, internal audits and breaches of the banking act through the over-commitment of bank capital to cover the Leeson losses seem to have completely passed Peter Baring and his associates by when they went cap in hand to the Bank of England — and file in hand to the SFO.

Whether this new insight into events within Bishopsgate will spawn an serious SFO investigation, other than in support of the Singapore case, still seems unlikely. More likely here is a rash of Bank of England enforced resignations at Barings which could see the departure of Tuckey, Norris and Baker, while Peter Baring may be forced into a ritualised resignation. As for Nick the Deal, he looks marked "export to Singapore as soon as possible". The German courts are only too happy to help where they have no interest — as the arrest and handing over of Abbas Gokal to the SFO to face BCCI charges proved only last year.

'Slicker'

British Management Part 13.
SIR FRANCIS WINGATE WILLIAM PEMBERTON, Director Severn Trent Water. Former director Barclays Bank and High Sheriff of Cambridgeshire. Director Agricultural Mortgage Corporation until 1991.



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1989	£3.542m	1991	−£2.837m	1993	£9.636m

THE DIRECTORS

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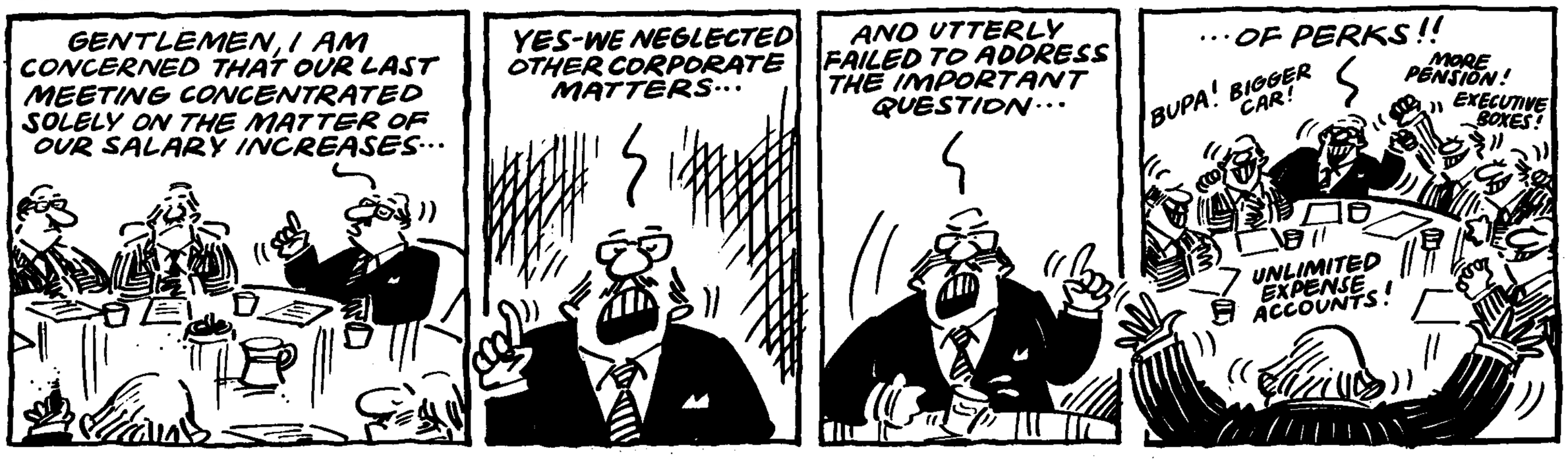
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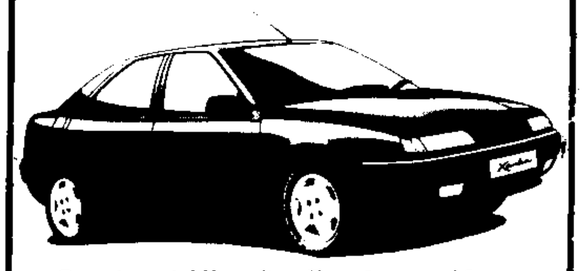

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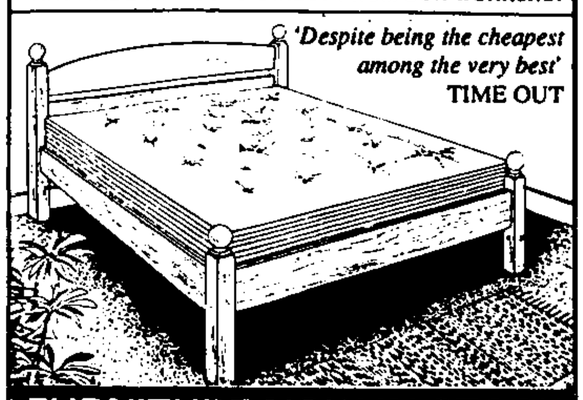

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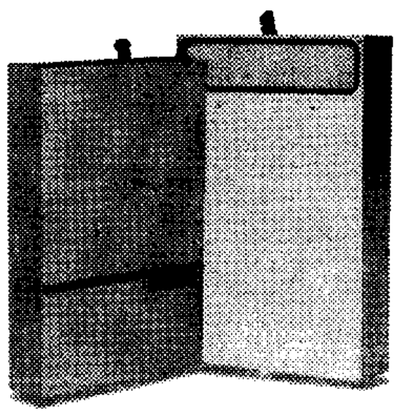

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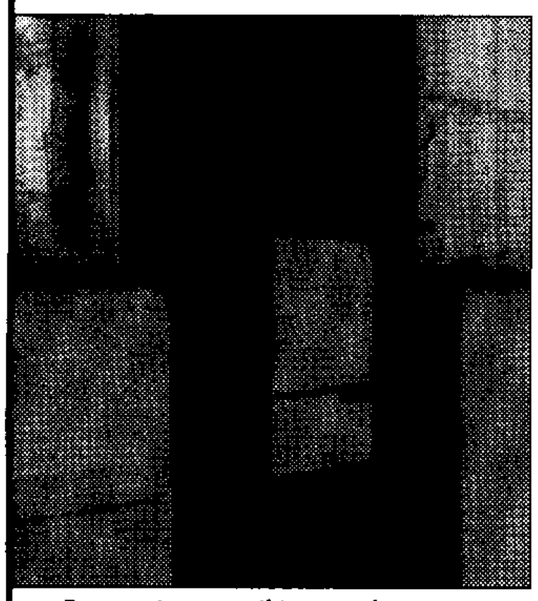

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AD10

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Imperial Cancer Research Fund

☐ I would like you to send a 'Conquest' rose bush & greetings card and enclose £12.50 (of which £8.39 will go directly to the Imperial Cancer Research Fund).

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(please tick as appropriate)

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Card No: _ _ _ _ / _ _ _ _ / _ _ _ _ / _ _ _ _

Signed ..... Expiry date .....

PLEASE COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING IN CAPITAL LETTERS:

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Address .....

..... Postcode .....

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Please note the following deadlines to ensure that the card, or card and rose, arrive by Mother's Day. CARD ONLY: Wednesday 22nd March 1995. CARD AND ROSE: Monday 20th March 1995. Cards and roses will be despatched during the week commencing Monday 20th March 1995.

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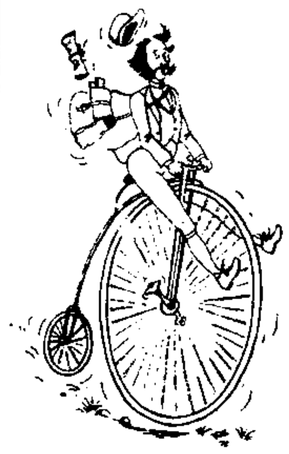

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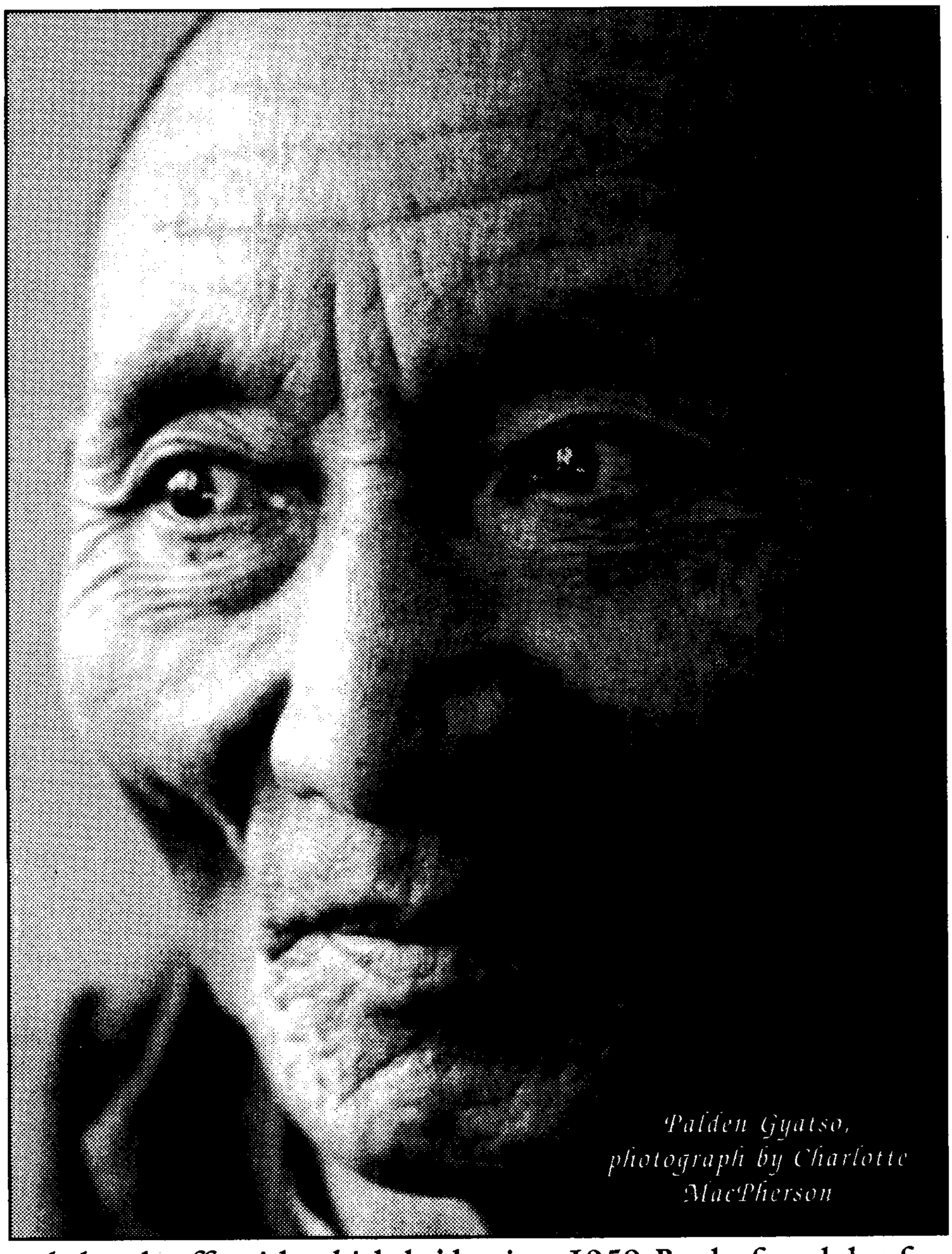
But we could.

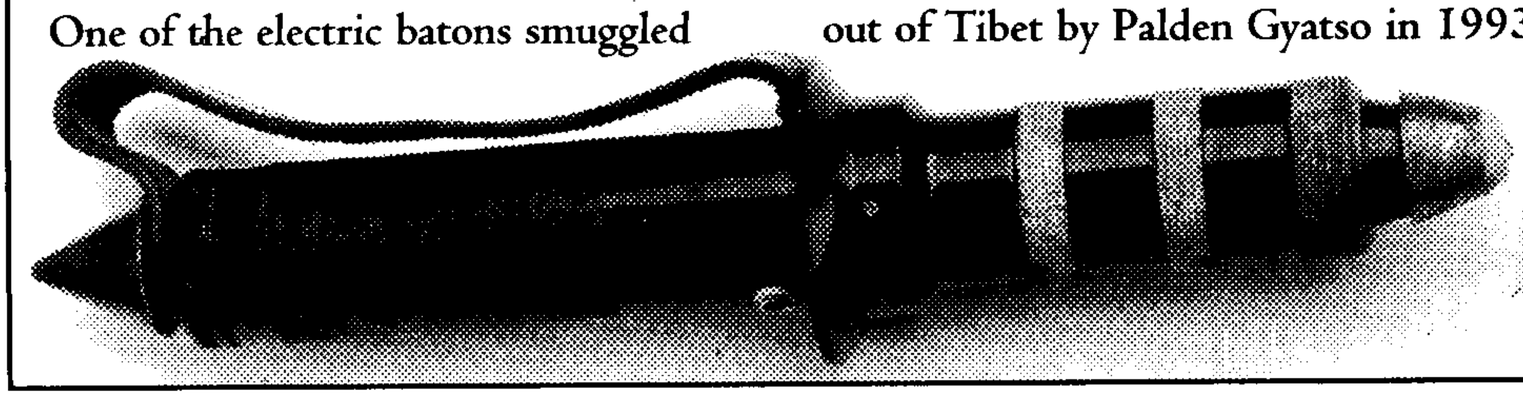

Palden Gyatso, photograph by Charlotte MacPherson

Palden Gyatso, a Tibetan monk, spent 30 years in Chinese prisons for daring to call for his country's freedom. During those years he was handcuffed, kicked, beaten with chains and a stick studded with nails, hung from the ceiling by his arms, starved until hunger drove him to eat his own boots, sent to a labour camp, forced to sign a false confession, given high voltage shocks, had an electric baton shoved down his throat and woke up lying in a pool of urine and vomit to find he had lost twenty of his teeth.

For 30 years, Palden's captors could not break his spirit. But we in the West may succeed where they failed. When he escaped, Palden smuggled out some of the knives, electric batons, handcuffs and thumbcuffs with which he'd been tortured. He desperately wanted the world to know what is happening in Tibet - illegally and brutally occupied by China since 1950. But he found that few Western politicans give a damn.

Palden Gyatso is in Britain to talk about his life - please contact us for details. But most of all, please honour Palden and those who are still suffering, by joining us and helping us keep up the pressure on China to free them and their tortured country.

One of the electric batons smuggled out of Tibet by Palden Gyatso in 1993.



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Jonathan Ross, Sunday Times

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SPEECH WRITING by Mitch Murray. See Page 30.

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SPEECHWRITING by MITCH MURRAY. See page 30.

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APOLOGIES! EYE LOVES have been held over in this issue due to lack of space. All will be published next issue.

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REBEL AT HEART? Attractive guy, 32, fit, seeks female rebel for lots of fun and laughs. Liking for motorbikes will help. Ring 0660 204103

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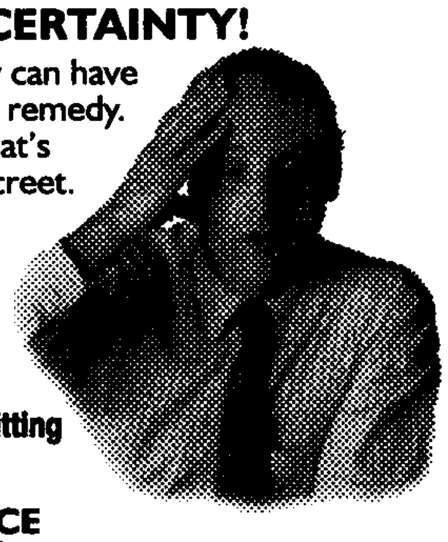

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Surname:_____

First Name:_____

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2. Personal Information

Marital Status: Single ❒ Divorced ❒

Widowed ❒ Separated ❒

Religion:_____

Age:_____

Place of Birth:_____

Do you have children of your own?

Yes ❒ No ❒

If yes, how many live with you?_____

3. Your personal details

Height:_____

Build: slight ❒ medium ❒ large ❒

Hair colour:_____

Dress/Looks: casual ❒ fashionable ❒ elegant ❒ sporty ❒

4. Your work

Present job:_____

Self-employed ❒ employed ❒

civil servant ❒ manual worker ❒

part-time ❒ not working ❒

unemployed ❒ in-training ❒

Schooling

O levels / GCSE's ❒ A levels ❒

Further Education ❒ Polytechnic ❒

University ❒ Business School ❒

Other:_____

5. Your Personality

❒ Warmhearted	❒ Fashionable
❒ Serious	❒ Practical
❒ Considerate	❒ Conventional
❒ Shy	❒ Reliable
❒ Romantic	❒ Adventurous

6. How would people who know you best describe you?

❒ always ready for a joke
❒ somewhat dreamy
❒ never has problems
❒ takes life a bit too seriously
❒ not easily upset
❒ always active
❒ chatty

7. Your interests

❒ Wining/Dining	❒ Jazz/Folk music
❒ Pubs	❒ Classical music
❒ Sports/Keep fit	❒ Theatre/Arts
❒ Politics/History	❒ Watching TV
❒ Reading	❒ Smoking
❒ Travelling	❒ Drinking
❒ Science/Tech	❒ Children
❒ Cinema	❒ Homemaking
❒ Pets/Animals	❒ Gardening
❒ Pop music	❒ Countryside

8. Details of the partner you would like:

Minimum age:____ Maximum age:_____

Height: min._____ max.____ Don't mind ❒

Children?

Yes, at home ❒ Yes, living elsewhere ❒

None ❒

Marital status: Single ❒ Divorced ❒

Widowed ❒ Separated ❒

Don't mind ❒

9. Which of the three pictures do you prefer? (tick the box)

Dept. PE 39

Please answer the questions above, cut out this page and send it to us at Dateline 23 Abingdon Road, London W8 6AL ***or call us now on 071 938 1011***

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